









THE LAST ADVENTURE OF COLLET.  
*T.F. Travaux Forcés (hard labour.)*



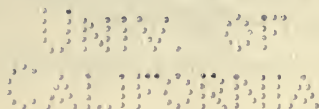
# FOUR FRENCH ADVENTURERS

(From the *CAUSES CÉLÈBRES*)

BY

STODDARD DEWEY

ILLUSTRATED



THOMAS NELSON & SONS  
LONDON • EDINBURGH • DUBLIN  
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*Here are true stories of swift lives :  
The men, born scamps ; the women, wives  
Such as scamps have, their love and faith  
Stronger than life, stronger than death ;  
And men and women all are whirled  
By Circumstance athwart a world,  
To the booming of great guns,  
Where in their bravery pass the sons  
Of thunder—big Napoleon ;  
Small Kings ; Vidocq policeman, one  
Of these same scamps whose spirits hot  
Made real life a rapid play,  
(As old divines of lost souls say)  
Like peas a-boiling in a pot.*

REPRODUCED FROM THE  
ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

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*Illustrations from Armand Fouquier's penny numbers, 1859.*



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## THE INGENIOUS MONSIEUR COLLET

### I

ANTHELME COLLET was his full name ; and he was born on the 10th of April, 1785, in the town of Belley, near what was then the frontier of France and Savoy. His father, Jean Baptiste, was a cabinetmaker ; his mother, Claudine Bertin, was a dressmaker ; and they owned a little land which they worked. Altogether, they supported themselves and their three children easily until the Revolution came to upset everybody and everything.

In 1793, after the Republicans had cut off the head of King Louis the Sixteenth, the armies of the monarchies of Europe prepared to invade France. In a fever of patriotism, nearly every able-bodied Frenchman enlisted in the Republican army to drive them back. Jean Baptiste Collet marched off with the rest ; and he was one of the first to be killed.

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With all her work the widow was unable to keep her three children together. So Anthelme was put to live with his grandfather, a man of the old school who believed that boys should be trained up to work, and that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. Anthelme Collet was now nine years old and wide-awake; and his ideas were very different from those of his grandfather. One morning he was nowhere to be found, but he was heard of shortly.

There was a General in the town, who encouraged the grandfather in his way of bringing up the boy. The General was expecting daily a child of his own. Young Collet went first to the pastrycook and gave premature notice of the event. He ordered for the occasion twenty dozen little cakes to be sent to the General's house. Then he dropped in at every cottage and farm where he thought a nurse might be hired, and left word to hurry away to the General. Every one believed the fat boy with his innocent face. Some gave him cakes and some gave him pennies, because he had brought them the General's custom; and all set out for the General's house.



The old soldier all but had a stroke when he saw the procession coming and learned what it was about. The boy had not gone far and he was soon brought home; but his grandfather washed his hands of him for evermore. This was the first turning-point of Collet's life. It set him on the way where the world's history was making; and things seemed contrived to help him add touches of his own to it.

The widow Collet had a brother who was a parish priest at Châlon on the Saone. His conscience would not allow him to take the oath which the Revolutionary Government exacted of all priests, and he was forced to flee the country. He arrived at Belley just in time to relieve his sister of her troubles about Anthelme. He agreed to take upon himself the support and education of his nephew; and together they crossed the Alps and found a refuge at Domo d'Ossola in Italy, at the foot of the Simplon Pass. Here they remained three years. Then they went on to Florence, where the priest's position as almoner of the late François de Bernis, archbishop and cardinal, and like himself a fugitive from the Revolution, assured them an honourable living.

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For four years more the uncle did his best to educate young Collet, so that he might become a priest and work for religion in France when the storm should go by. He gave his nephew a writing-master, and the pupil soon turned out more expert than his teacher. He could imitate all the different kinds of handwriting from official documents to private letters. In the monastery at Florence where the boy was put to study Latin, the monks were in admiration of his mastery of the plain chant and all the ceremonies of their church services. His studies never went much further, for all serious teaching encountered his innocent good-nature like water that falls on a duck's back.

His uncle's efforts in his behalf were by no means lost; but they served for a career of which the old priest never dreamed. Besides his handwriting, Collet acquired a close knowledge of the ways of churchmen, who were still powerful in spite of the Revolution. He had a good, educated, diplomatic use of language in his own French and in Italian, with plenty of show phrases in Latin; and his quick wit caught up the ways of the men of the great world around him. He did not

bother about women, who interfered with his ideas of living. And, everywhere and always, his nerves were as undisturbed as his good-nature.

Little by little persecution passed away in France, and the priest and his nephew ventured back to Belley. Anthelme Collet was now a stout young man of sixteen. He found at Belley another uncle, who was a soldier, and had been fighting with Napoleon in Egypt. With his experience of life, this uncle was clearer-sighted than the rest of the family. He cross-examined his demure nephew closely, and soon came to the conclusion that, for any ordinary career in the world, he knew nothing at all.

‘He will never be a priest,’ said the soldier-uncle.

‘I fear he is too lazy to study,’ the priest-uncle acknowledged.

Both agreed—‘There is nothing to do but make him a soldier.’

The soldier had worked his way up to the rank of major in the army. This gave him some influence with the military authorities. Officers were being used up too rapidly in Napoleon’s wars for them to be difficult with the young men who presented themselves at

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the military schools. Under the particular protection of Monsieur de Saint-Germain, a retired officer who had distinguished himself in many fights, Anthelme Collet was entered at one of the new schools for young officers—the Prytanée of Fontainebleau.

There was also no time to waste over these future Generals and Marshals of the Grande Armée. In two months young Collet was made a corporal; in five he was a sergeant; at the end of ten months he passed his examination for active service. Whatever else he learned, he knew all about the ways and formalities of military men; and he was to have a few years' more training in garrison. It was all preparing him for an amazing career, which was no more that of a soldier than it was that of a churchman.

Collet was now seventeen, and a sub-lieutenant in the 101st regiment of the line. His first station was Brescia in North Italy. The more he saw of military life, the more he regretted the peaceful days when he was supposed to be studying for the Church. In the garrison of Brescia he soon got the nickname of 'the Capuchin officer,' because he spent so much of his leisure time with the Capuchins



at their convent of San Giuseppe. The friars and superior were all sure that this serious, innocent-minded young officer had mistaken his true vocation.

After a time there was need of troops further south, and Collet was ordered first to Bologna, then to Fondi in the dominion of Naples, and finally to Gaetà by the sea, which the French army was besieging. Here he went under fire for the first time.

The experience was not to his liking. A splinter from an exploded bomb struck him in the right side and stretched him on an ambulance bed. He may have groaned more than he suffered, for the military authorities promptly packed him off to the hospital of San Giacomo in the city of Naples. All this gave him time for reflection.

It was the year 1806, the first year of the reign of Joseph Bonaparte, whom his all-powerful brother Napoleon had just made King of Naples. Collet was twenty-one years old, and he had spent four years in garrison and camp. There was not a Frenchman living who would not have thought him lucky to win his epaulets so young; but Collet had other ideas in the back of his head.

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### II

The chaplain of the hospital was a Dominican friar who loved religion and peace, and detested the French Revolution and all its wars. Collet was used to friars. He told the chaplain how he had been educated for the Church. Every day he poured his laments into the friar's bosom.

‘I was not made for a soldier. The life of a soldier will surely lead me to my eternal damnation.’

The Dominican was greatly moved. At last, one day as he made his rounds, he leaned over the bed of Collet, and whispered to him, ‘Hurry up to get well, and I will find a place for you.’

Collet was soon on his feet ; but he did not wish to go away empty-handed. He interested himself in the other patients. His soothing ways won the confidence of a French major, who was dying of a wound received during the siege of Gaetà. He had seen Collet with his men, and had no hesitation to entrust him with a little package which he wished to be delivered to his family in France. Collet promised everything, noted the address care-

fully, and eased the anxiety of his brother officer, who shortly died. Then Collet opened the package and found what he so much desired—his provision in case of need.

There was a purse with one hundred and sixty-five gold 'napoleons' (worth about as many pounds sterling at the time), a gold watch, and two rings, one with a diamond. There was the cross of honour which the dead man had won in the wars, and all his family papers. Collet saved these papers carefully along with the rest. They might be useful later if he should choose to appear under the dead officer's name.

Collet had enough experience of the world around him to know one thing. Success in the new career which he was about to begin was going to depend on his identification papers, appropriate dress and manners, and a constant supply of ready money. For the rest, he must rely on his own cool nerves and ready wit.

Of course, Collet did not shock the Dominican friar by telling him all this. After malingering for a time in the hospital, he went out one day for a walk. The friar brought him to a place where he changed his uniform

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for civilian dress ; and hospital and regiment knew him no more. He was not the only deserter in those troublous times.

At Caserta, twenty-eight miles from the city of Naples, the brother of the chaplain had an out-of-the-way dwelling. He was an old man, living retired in his country estate and hating all soldiers, atheists, and French Revolutionists. With him Collet found a safe hiding-place for six months, with plenty to eat and drink and nothing to do, amid pleasant surroundings. At the end of that time, the war had passed by and all danger seemed to be over. Collet had now to fulfil the promise which he had made to the chaplain.

The Dominican took him to his own convent of San Pietro, where the friars were sorely in need of novices. In the white gown and black mantle of the Dominicans no one would dream of looking for the French lieutenant.

For two years Collet went through the ordinary training of the novices. The friars found him backward in Latin ; but he was a ready pupil in sacred eloquence. He had a good memory and learned short sermons on all sorts of subjects ; and he delivered them



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in good Italian with great fire. This was a valuable gift among the friars, who were trying to lead the people back to religion by sending bands of preaching missionaries through the country.

Collet was to be put to work with the others. At the end of his two years he was tonsured, and received the minor orders. Then he was sent out with a mission band into Apulia. This was the other side of the dominion of Naples, and he saw that hard work was before him. He was tired of the monotonous religious life of the convent, but this kind of variety pleased him still less. So far he had managed to keep his little inheritance from the dead major hidden from the friars. He took it with him in case of need, for he fully intended to desert the missionaries, just as he had deserted the army, at the first opportunity. When he learned the part he was to take in the mission work, he changed his mind. He was to teach the catechism, preach little instructions—and take up the collections. He also kept the accounts. By the time the little band got back to the convent, he had been able to add a thousand francs to his secret store of money.

The time had come when Collet had either

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to get away or be found out. In the ordinary course of a friar's life he would receive the major orders, ending with the priesthood. It was now time for him to be ordained sub-deacon; and for this the bishop would demand two documents. One was a dispensation from the Pope, allowing a man that had been a soldier and might have shed blood in war, to receive holy orders. The other was more difficult. It was necessary that the bishop of his birthplace, Belley, should give him an *exeat*, that is, leave to be ordained in another diocese than his own.

In the general upsetting of the Revolution, the administration of the bishopric of Belley had been transferred to Lyons. Now the Archbishop of Lyons was Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch; and, what was worse, he was also the Emperor's ambassador to the Pope in Rome. It was not prudent to have Collet's record scrutinised by him too closely.

Meanwhile Collet was set to work preparing the children of the neighbouring parish for their first communion. One of them was the son of the Sindaco or mayor, among whose official duties was the giving out of the passports which a traveller in those days had to

present to the authorities whenever asked. Collet was soon on friendly terms with the father. He profited by this, one day when he was alone in the mayor's office, to slip a number of passports into his pocket. The mayor had signed them in advance and only the name of the bearer remained to be filled in. Thanks to such passports and to his provision of money, Collet hoped to succeed in getting away and starting life anew elsewhere. But he wished first to realise another idea which had come into his head.

Not far from the convent was the country house of the famous banker, Torlonia. His career had been almost as surprising in its transformations as Collet's was to be ; but he followed honourable ways, and they had led him to the highest positions in the world of his day.

Torlonia began life in a small way in the little city of Siena, where he was born. He became a dealer in second-hand goods and antiquities. A powerful, half-sovereign German prince, Josef Maria Benedikt von Fürstenberg, made his acquaintance, and found in him a man to his liking. The Prince needed an agent in Rome and gave Torlonia the place,

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using his hereditary right to name him a noble of the Holy Roman Empire. It was not easy to steer his course amid the storms of revolution ; but by his good sense in money matters, Torlonia soon became one of the richest bankers in Europe. About the time he met Collet, he reached the height of his ambition, and was made a Roman Patrician with the title of Duke of Bracciano. There is still a duke of his name, and his family has intermarried with all the old Roman nobility.

Into this life of success and honours, Collet came for a moment only ; but he left the banker a mortifying remembrance of himself. On the return of the missionaries, Collet had been sent to the banker to deposit with him the money he had collected for them. Torlonia and Collet must have had a good impression of each other, for the visit was repeated more than once. Collet conceived the idea of profiting by this, now that his time was getting short, and he went to the superior of the convent and told him an interesting story.

‘ When I became an officer in the French army,’ he said, ‘ my family settled on me ten thousand francs a year. I could not ask for the money after I deserted ; but it is mine by



law, and it has been accumulating these three years. I feel it is my duty to have it signed over to our community. Signor Torlonia will find means to have the transfer made without any risk.'

The superior was delighted, and sent Collet off to Naples next morning, to see the banker at his office. He gave him a sealed letter for Torlonia and a small box for a jeweller in the city. Collet was careful to take with him his own secret store of money and his precious passports. On his way he stepped into a little inn and asked for hot water. The wax seal of the letter was easily loosened. The superior warmly recommended to the banker's good offices the bearer, a young French friar of his convent, who wished to arrange for the transfer of an annuity on which thirty thousand francs were now due. In the box for the jeweller there was a diamond ring to be remounted.

Collet resealed the letter and went straight to the bank. Torlonia received him with honour and took him to his private room. He instructed the unworldly young friar in the legal measures which would have to be taken to transfer his annuity; and, when Collet in the name of his superior asked for

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an advance of twenty-two thousand francs on the sum actually due, the banker counted them out to him in ready money without the slightest hesitation. Collet then went on to the jeweller and obtained three other rings as models from which his superior should choose for the resetting of the diamond.

The die was cast. Collet knew he had now no time to lose. In one of the city shops he bought a suit of clothes, such as an unassuming gentleman might wear, and carried it away with him in a carriage which he had hired. He dismissed the carriage some distance along the road to his convent, toward which he continued walking with his bundle like a lowly friar. At the first convenient spot he doffed his gown and cloak, put on his gentleman's dress, and struck across country to Aversa.

Here he took the best room at the hotel. With one of the signed passports in his possession he soon made out a new identity for himself. He then proceeded to order horses and a carriage to convey posthaste, to Capua, far on the way to Rome—the Marquis Dada.

## III

Collet was new to his venturesome trade. He acknowledged later that, for once, his heart all but failed him on his arrival at Capua.

At the city gates the police did not seem at all impressed by his noble title. They informed him they would have to keep his passport for further examination. He had scarcely entered his room at the hotel when the commissary of police sent word that he was coming forthwith to visit the Marquis Dada. Collet was uneasy. Had he blundered in filling out his passport? For a moment he thought of seeking safety in flight—when the door opened and the police magistrate appeared.

One glance was enough to restore Collet to his usual assurance. The commissary stood, hat in hand, bowing and excusing his subordinates.

‘Signor Marchese, I have hastened to make amends for their blunder and to bring back Your Excellency’s passport.’

Collet had a shrewd idea of the real trouble. He answered indulgently, praising the zeal of

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the police; and he slipped five of his gold napoleons into the commissary's hand. He invited the magistrate to lunch with him and, when they had well eaten and drunk, they went companionably together into the town to see about hiring a carriage for Gaetà. When the Marquis Dada departed, the police saw their superior bowing, hat in hand, and speeding him respectfully on his way.

The carriage had not gone far when it overtook a French officer, walking alone in the sun and dust. Collet stopped, and found that the officer was bound for Terracina. He invited him to share his carriage, and the two were soon on friendly terms.

The Frenchman was Captain Tholozan, a young officer of the 10th regiment of the line. He belonged to Lyons, and he had already won the cross of the Legion of Honour. Collet knew how precarious his own assumed position as a member of the Italian aristocracy would prove. With pressing kindness he offered to take his new companion to his destination at Terracina, although it was several miles beyond the point of the road where he should himself turn down to Gaetà. He treated the Captain



with such abundant hospitality that, before leaving him, he managed to obtain possession of the pocket-book containing his private papers. Then, when safely out of sight along the road, instead of going back toward Gaetà he drove posthaste in the other direction, straight on to Rome.

Collet took time by the way to study carefully these new identification papers and family letters which had fallen so opportunely into his hands. His skill in handwriting helped him to make a few useful changes in the official papers; and he tied to his buttonhole the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. The real Captain, when he discovered his loss, might not attribute it to the young Italian noble by whose hospitality he had so largely profited. Even if he did, neither his nor any other complaint would set the police looking for the Marquis Dada elsewhere than in the dominion of Naples. In those days, too, there were no telegraphs, no quick means even for police authorities to convey information from city to city.

Collet, as soon as he arrived in Rome, presented himself to the secretary of Cardinal Fesch as Captain Tholozan in person.

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The secretary, a young French abbé, was delighted to meet a French officer of whom he had often heard from an intimate friend of his own, Monsieur de Courtine, who happened to be the Captain's brother-in-law. Collet took out of his pocket-book late letters from Courtine. The secretary was won and, on the spot, insisted on lodging the new-comer with himself in his master's palace. This gave Collet all the air of being a protégé of the Emperor's uncle. The guileless abbé added to this prestige by introducing Collet here and there as a member of a rich French family.

No one knew better than Collet how to make much use of little time. He discounted a bill for 60,000 francs with a prominent merchant; the Cardinal's banker advanced him 10,000 francs; he borrowed 5000 francs from the pastrycook, and 1800 from the palace gardener; and, from the Cardinal's jeweller, he bought gems to the amount of 60,000 francs more, of course without paying. Then, pretending sudden business that called him from Rome for a few days, he posted off to Turin, bearing letters of introduction from the secretary and the Cardinal himself.

Collet understood that he had run nearly

the full length of his tether. He was careful not to disclose his presence in Turin, and at once took pains to find out if news had come to hand concerning himself in his various personalities. He knew that he had arrived ahead of any possible post, and, by his usual wise distribution of money, he succeeded in intercepting a weighty letter from Cardinal Fesch to the chief of the Turin police.

All his victims of the last few weeks had complained, one after the other. The Dominicans and Torlonia had their sad story of the apostate French friar. The police commissary of Capua had been made responsible for letting the spurious Marquis Dada slip through his fingers. The Cardinal's secretary had discovered that the real Captain Tholozan had not been in Rome at all ; while those who had poured money and jewels into the hands of the pretender were clamouring furiously.

#### IV

About this time, in the late summer of 1810, the diligence from the Italian frontier set down one of its passengers in Lugano, the largest town of the Swiss canton of Ticino.

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He was a stout, youngish man, dressed like a tradesman. His passport was in order; he bore a common name; he was familiar with all that lake region from Como to Domo d'Ossola. His presence excited no more than the ordinary curiosity. He took up his quarters with the printer of the town, explaining that he had a small sum of money to invest and was thinking of buying a business of the kind. He soon made the acquaintance of the principal inhabitants, and remained on through the winter.

Collet, for it was he, filled a long-felt want in the little town. Before winter was over, he had organised a theatre in which the young people could exercise their talent. He showed them the way, and had several stage costumes made for himself as general, bishop, military intendant, which were leading parts played by the public men of the time.

Meanwhile the Turin police replied despairingly to all complaints. The ex-friar, spurious Marquis Dada, and counterfeit Captain Tholozan must have slipped into some crack of the universe. With their utmost effort, they had been unable to find him.

Collet never liked to be quiet long. He



was ready for a new campaign when spring opened in Lugano. From the official papers of Cardinal Fesch in Rome, he had been able to replenish his own stock. He had blank certificates of ordination to the priesthood, appointments to various ecclesiastical dignities, and even a papal nomination to the bishop's rank. He informed his new friends that business matters called him back to Italy for a time, and took the diligence across the frontier.

A few days later a post-chaise brought to Briançon, the frontier fortress of the new French department of the Hautes Alpes, a clean-shaven man, wearing the cassock and usual dress of a travelling ecclesiastic. He accepted the hospitality of the *curé*, explaining that he was a priest of Naples who had been obliged to leave his country for political reasons. His papers were in order; and the next day he went on to Gap, the bishop's seat, carrying letters from the parish priest of Briançon.

Now that the Revolution had swept away the goods of the Church, these provincial bishops had to struggle with limited means for the subsistence of their clergy. The vicar-general was not enchanted with this foreign

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addition to their number, and could only offer to attach Collet to a convent chapel which had no living revenues.

Collet modestly protested that he would be a burden to no one. He was in possession of an annuity of 10,000 francs from his family, and this was more than sufficient for his own wants.

The vicar-general thawed at once. He found appropriate lodgings for the new-comer and presented him to the bishop, who offered him a place at his own table. He was also invited to preach in the cathedral. Considering his foreign origin, the assisting clergy were not overmuch astonished to hear him declaim, with the air of one trained to Italian sacred eloquence, a sermon made up of passages from the best orators of the French pulpit.

In his dearth of clergy, the bishop offered to the Neapolitan priest the parish of Monestier, where the *curé* had lately died. It was in a beautiful mountain region, ten miles from Briançon. Collet liked to be by himself, without too close supervision, and he accepted the post.

During his stay among them Collet's

parishioners had little to complain of. He was easy-going, and, while he liked good living, he paid out his own money for it. With the end of the fine season, he had his fill of mountain air and quiet. He called his parishioners together and spoke to them of the dilapidated condition of their fine fifteenth-century church. He was willing to contribute generously to its restoration, if they would do their part. They managed to collect a few thousand francs for the purpose, and handed them over to their Italian priest. He took a few days' vacation—to find a suitable architect and set the good work going.

Within a week, the police of Turin noted the passage of a brigadier-general of Napoleon's army. They saluted him with proper respect. His commission was in order, and his papers showed that he had collected his road indemnity in different military posts along his way. He stayed in Turin only long enough to cash a bill of exchange for 10,000 francs, and then left for Como.

The military authorities very soon discovered that the pretended general was an impostor. The gendarmes were dispatched in hot pursuit. They galloped along the high

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roads in every direction, but they were unable to learn of the passage of any traveller of his consequence. A bishop indeed, riding in his own carriage, had passed on his way to Genoa. He was travelling alone, which was unusual; but he had just lost by death the almoner who usually accompanied him. The death certificate had been duly signed at Novi. No one for a moment gave the slightest heed to the bishop. It was too important to find the general, for the Turin police were still smarting from their failure of a year ago.

### V

The bishop, wearing his violet robe and skullcap, duly arrived at Nice and took a modest suite of rooms at a hotel. He gave his name as Monseigneur Pasqualini. The Bishop of Nice soon heard of his presence in the episcopal city and sent his two vicars-general to offer his best services.

Collet had no difficulty in acting his part. He looked older than his years, and youthfulness was not uncommon among Italian prelates of high rank. With due ceremony the dignified ecclesiastics kissed the bishop's



ring on the fat hand, which he extended gravely. He raised his hand in blessing, and consented to visit his colleague of Nice.

The impression was so favourable that Collet was presented to the students for the priesthood at the seminary. He was asked to preside at the coming ordination, and preached to them an uplifting sermon on holy orders. The Bishop of Nice assigned to his Italian guest one of his own priests, to take the place of the almoner who had died. Collet had no mind to be accompanied so closely. It was plain there was nothing for him to do at Nice, and he soon left for Cannes, with his unwelcome almoner at his side. At Cannes he announced shortly that he would continue his journey to Grasse.

Collet delayed his departure until late in the day. At midnight, still accompanied by his almoner, he had not yet arrived at his destination. They were just entering a lonely wood when four men leaped out and halted the carriage, firing a musket in the air with the usual cry of brigands—‘Your money or your life!’

The bishop tremblingly held out a box clinking with gold pieces; the almoner fainted

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dead away. The brigands disappeared, and the carriage made its way to Grasse without further incident. The almoner took to his bed, and troubled Monseigneur Pasqualini no more. This alone, to Collet's mind, was well worth the twenty-five gold napoleons which he had given to a peasant of the coast for organising the attack of the brigands ; but he was bent on following up so good an opportunity.

Monseigneur Pasqualini complained to the authorities of Grasse that he had been stripped of priceless jewels and of 80,000 francs in gold, which was his sole provision for his travels. The people of the town collected 8000 francs for him. A rich merchant offered to lend him for immediate needs 30,000 francs more. Collet accepted gratefully, and signed his note in return.

It was again high time he was moving on ; but he chanced to hear that, a few miles away, there was living in a handsome château one of Napoleon's generals who had been promoted lately, after distinguished service in the war in Spain. Making sure that the General was absent, Collet presented himself to his wife, Madame Lévêque de La Ferrière, as the

General's fellow-soldier in the Italian campaign. He explained, glancing modestly at his bishop's robe and ring, that he had since then taken orders.

The General's wife received Monseigneur Pasqualini with her best hospitality. Very likely Collet had really served with her husband or with some of his comrades, at the beginning of his own military career. He was able to relate many incidents of close friendship to the lady, without being caught tripping in his story.

The bishop did not outstay his welcome. He gave his blessing to the General's family and took honoured leave. With him Monseigneur Pasqualini vanished utterly from the world, to the profound astonishment of various people and police, who were anxiously demanding news of him all through southwestern France and northern Italy.

## VI

The next move was on Paris. In so large a city, Collet knew that his presence would pass unnoticed, and time would help the Emperor's police to forget him. Paris was kind to him beyond all his hopes.

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He arrived with the passport and in the dress of an ordinary citizen. He put up at an ordinary hotel, and made no display of his riches. In those days of furious gambling and debauch, he sought no companions. It was also a time of easy money-making; but he seems never to have thought of profiting by the large sums in his possession, to gain a fortune and win a position in society. From his youth, all his cleverness and self-control had been turned to acting new parts in life, and to getting other people's ready money into his own pockets. Of this he dreamed and planned all through life. This, and to be on pleasant terms with those around him, was his sole ambition.

One day Collet was loitering in the Tuileries gardens when he came face to face with Monsieur de Saint-Germain, the retired officer who had procured him admission to the military school years before. Each recognised the other, and Saint-Germain asked his quondam protégé of his success in the career. He had evidently never heard of the desertion at Naples.

Collet, with his usual quick wit, gave a highly satisfactory story in answer. He had



left active service on receiving a family inheritance ; but he was already tired of inactivity. Knowing that Saint-Germain was poor, Collet begged him to accept a hundred goldnapoleons, and once more to use his influence at the War Office to get him a commission in the army.

It was the year 1812, when Napoleon's armies were scampering over all Europe. His police had their hands too full of the political adversaries of the Empire to pay much attention to other offenders. Collet had reason to trust that no one would go to the trouble of hunting up his military record.

Saint-Germain made him acquainted with two generals of division. Collet understood good living, and gave them sumptuous dinners at the best Paris restaurants. In a short time, he had his commission as lieutenant in the 47th regiment of the line, then in garrison at Brest.

Collet soon became popular with the officers of the regiment. He posed as the son of a wealthy family and lived accordingly. He gave good dinners to his comrades, and helped them out with money in their needs. But he had no idea of giving up, at twenty-seven

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years of age, his own peculiar career. Besides, he did not like to see his store of money going down.

To make good the losses which the Church had suffered from the Revolution, the Pope had recently commissioned Augustinian friars to collect money in the various Catholic countries. Collet, who knew all about friars, easily procured the proper religious habit for himself. Then he received a letter, which he had had sent to himself, asking him to visit his family to settle pressing business. This was plausible enough for one with his reputation of wealth, and he had no difficulty in obtaining two months' leave of absence from his military superiors.

Instead of going on to his native town of Belley, where his family was still living, Collet turned aside at Lorient into the departments of the north of France. They offered a new and untried field for his labours. Donning his Augustinian gown, he started on his way.

In each department, he first correctly presented himself to the prefect or civil authority. He had letters patent from Rome to show, with papers from his immediate religious superiors; and he was careful, in each new

place, to secure a written authorisation to carry out his mission. At Rennes, Saint-Brieuc, Laval, Alençon, Caen, and as far as the Pas de Calais, he met with no difficulty, and took up fruitful collections. It was only when he reached Boulogne that he learned the sub-prefect Armand was on the point of ordering his arrest under suspicion.

Collet disappeared overnight. The gendarmes, hurrying in pursuit along all the roads from Boulogne, found a single carriage that seemed to be driving in haste. They ordered it to stop, when, to their surprise, a military intendant in full uniform looked out and asked their business. In some confusion they saluted with proper respect, excused themselves by the urgency of their search, and pressed forward.

Collet got back to Lorient and Brest just as the mysterious disappearance of the Augustinian friar, after his successful imposture, had become known. Collet laughed with the rest. He did not mention that he had 60,000 francs more about his person than when he went on leave. But he did announce his coming marriage with a rich heiress whom his family had found for him. The marriage

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settlements were the important business which had made his journey home necessary.

### VII

Collet now kept quiet in his garrison for several months. His popularity among the officers of his regiment was unabated. Often they drank, at his expense, to his approaching marriage.

This year of 1812 was proving fateful. Napoleon, with an army of half a million men, was fighting his way into Russia. His generals in Spain were left to themselves to carry on the disheartening war against a whole people, who were aided by the English troops under Wellington. France itself was half disorganised. Collet felt the time was propitious for a new campaign of his own.

The seacoast garrison where he was stationed had little to do. His colonel easily granted him another leave of absence, to settle finally his marriage affairs. Lieutenant Collet came duly to Paris. For several days he kept company again with his friends of the War Office. Then he went on to visit his family in Belley.



At Valence, on the river Rhone, the commanding officer at the citadel received unexpectedly the official visit of an inspector-general of the army, Count Charles Alexander de Borromeo. This was a well-known name of the lake region of North Italy, with which Collet had been familiar from his childhood. The nobles of those parts had long since distinguished themselves in Napoleon's service.

The commandant ventured to express his surprise that the War Office had not had sufficient confidence in him to advise him beforehand of the coming of an army inspector. General Borromeo reassured him by drawing his attention to the irregular condition of things in France, with all these foreign expeditions and the absence of the Emperor. His own commission was in order, and he wore on his breast various medals and decorations earned by service in the wars. The garrison was ordered out, to receive him with due military honours.

Under Collet's direction, the commandant of Valence officially notified the next military station of Inspector-General Borromeo's coming. At his request, he also furnished

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him the necessary officers to compose his staff. The major, who was to be his chief of staff, was promoted by Collet to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. General Borromeo also made an excellent impression on the civil authorities, for whom he promised a good word with the Emperor. He drew 20,000 francs from the military funds and went on to Avignon.

For some time Collet played his part undisturbed. In each new garrison his coming was announced with official regularity from the last. His staff officers were completely won over to him by his pleasant manners and good treatment. Everywhere they made themselves sponsors of their General, Count Borromeo.

Collet did not lose sight of the main chance amid all these honours. At Avignon he drew 115,000 francs; at Marseilles, 200,000 francs; at Nîmes, 30,000 francs—and so on. Later, many heads puzzled themselves unavailingly to find out what he could have done with all this money. It disappeared as if by magic in his hands; and yet, when his fortune turned, it was always at his disposition when wanted.

If Napoleon, if Collet, had been content to

let well enough alone, there is no telling how long they might have kept on triumphantly. With both the pitcher was going too often to the well; it was sure to be broken. For six years Collet had met with uninterrupted success. He presumed too much on its lasting; but he was equal to himself in his decline and fall.

### VIII

At Montpellier, the seat of the prefecture of the department of the Hérault, Collet outdid all his previous military inspecting. He ordered a full review of the troops of the region and passed it brilliantly, surrounded by the authorities, military and civil. The review was followed by an official banquet given in his honour by the Prefect.

The dinner was well under way when the great doors of the banquet-hall were flung open. A squad of gendarmes waited outside, while their officer strode up to the table and clapped his hand on the shoulder of the Inspector-General, who was being honoured. Before the open-mouthed guests, he was arrested and haled off to prison. The amazement of his staff officers, who were led away

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to share his prison, was pitiable. In vain they protested their utter innocence. If they were really his dupes like the others, then they would have to prove it.

The army had been the life of France during an entire generation. Collet's wholesale pillage of the military funds created a stir greater than any amount of relieving private citizens of their money. For twenty days the examining judge to whom the case was committed questioned and investigated. He could not even find out who the spurious general, Count Borromeo, really was.

The Prefect of the Hérault had a particular reason to feel mortified. The honour he had shown to the impostor was more compromising to his civil authority than their obedience had been to the military authorities. Collet had publicly promised him the grand cordon of the Legion of Honour. To mask his discomfiture, the Prefect could think of nothing better than another dinner to the authorities, at which he would display Collet in his new rôle as prisoner.

While waiting for the hour to come, the gendarmes marched Collet to the palace of the Prefecture, and installed him under guard



in a convenient pantry. At the end of the dinner they were to bring him in, with the walnuts and the wine.

Collet had a cool head, keen eyes, and a prying disposition. He had not long been left alone when he discovered in a corner the white apron, cap and coat, of one of the under cooks who was serving in livery at the Prefect's table. The gendarme on guard outside the door had his attention distracted by the constant going and coming of domestics serving a great dinner. He did not heed the fat-faced cook who came out of the pantry behind him with a heaping dish in his hand and walked off with the others.

When the Prefect sent word to the gendarme to usher the prisoner into the dining-hall as a surprise to his guests, it was the Prefect who was surprised. Collet was nowhere to be found.

The Prefect was thoroughly frightened, for this compromised him more than ever. The gendarmes were hurried off in every direction; but, search their best, they were unable to discover what had become of their prisoner. It profited his ex-staff officers, who had now to be released.

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Collet, when he came out of the door of the Prefect's palace, walked straight across the narrow street and entered the opposite house, like a man that knows his own business. It was the house of a journeyman mason. Just as the man who is afraid of fire notes the fire escapes of the houses where he passes, so Collet may have noticed the mason and his house before. At any rate his money, ready to hand, quickly won over the mason; and Collet kept to his little attic room until the excitement had passed. It was so obvious that no one dreamed of looking for him in it.

The blundering Prefect had also to keep to his house. He had received imperative orders to consider himself under arrest until the Imperial Government should satisfy itself as to his mysterious adventure. From his attic Collet, each morning, could see the pre-occupied Prefect over the way, shaving at his window.

With the help of his host, Collet managed to get news from his regiment, which was at Lorient. His leave of absence was not yet over, and his friends were waiting to welcome him back. No one had thought of associating Lieutenant Collet of the 47th regiment of



the line with the pretended inspector-general. He accordingly set out to rejoin his garrison on the north-western coast, as it was his military duty to do.

Meanwhile all efforts to ascertain the identity of the inspector-general, Count Charles Alexander de Borromeo, completely failed. He had vanished from the universe for a number of years.

## IX

Collet was nearly two hundred miles on his way, when he fell into a new adventure. Perhaps the spirit that possessed him had grown so strong by exercise and impunity that he was no longer able to resist a tempting opportunity. Perhaps he was in too great a hurry to recoup his damaged fortune.

At Tulle, capital of the central department of the Corrèze, he ran across the chief clerk of a large bank of Grenoble. Collet was travelling as an ordinary citizen. He knew something of Grenoble, which is not far from his native Belley, and he soon struck up a friendship with his fellow-countryman. When they parted, Collet had 5000 francs of the

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banker's money in his pocket. It was an advance on a bill for 12,000 francs, which Collet had signed with a false name.

Collet got safely to Lorient, and took up with relief the orderly life of his garrison. His brother officers inquired about his marriage. He was as popular, as unsuspected, as ever.

Then that which was bound to come sooner or later happened.

Business men are keener where their money is concerned than churchmen, or soldiers, or civil service officials. The Grenoble bank clerk set out patiently to trace the man whose victim he had been. He found him at last in the person of the popular lieutenant of the Lorient garrison. Collet was arrested for the second time, and taken off to Grenoble to be tried.

No other charge was brought against him, and his fellow-officers could not understand it. Perhaps he had been spending too much money; or perhaps he had been pressed by some needs of his marriage settlements. In a single moment of weakness, contrary to all they had known of him, he must have yielded to a temptation that came his way. And this seems to have been the view taken by his judges.

The crime was forgery, which in those days was punished even more severely than now. The fact of the false signature was beyond dispute. Collet was sentenced, mildly for the time, to five years of hard labour.

By reason of his good reputation in the past, perhaps for other more tangible reasons, prison and hard labour were made easy for Collet. For a time he was placed in the prison infirmary. Then he was employed as assistant jailer. In prison, as in convents and garrisons, no complaint of insubordination was ever made against Collet.

No court or prison record, either now or afterwards, explains what Collet did with the large sums of money that came into his hands. No considerable amount of money was ever taken from him when he was arrested. Even in prison he always seemed to have money at his disposal. But something happened, during his trial at Grenoble, which may help to piece out this gap in our knowledge of his career.

In French judicial procedure, the withdrawal of a criminal charge by the original complainant counts heavily in the accused party's favour. This is the case even when the nature of the crime obliges the State

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prosecutor to continue the trial in the public interest of law and order.

In the midst of Collet's trial, the Grenoble bank and its chief clerk formally withdrew their charge against him. They explained to the judges that the respectable family of the accused party had reimbursed and indemnified them to the full extent of their demands.

### X

It was in 1813 that Collet began his first prison term, under his own name and for the single crime of Tulle. Nothing else had come to light of his varied career, with his many personalities.

His Italian doings may have still been fresh in the memories of the friars, Torlonia and Cardinal Fesch, but all record of them slept in the archives of the police of Turin. The Bishop of Gap, no doubt, remembered his Neapolitan parish priest. Monseigneur Pasqualini was still awaited in Nice and Grasse. The Augustinian of Boulogne and General Count Borromeo had left regrets behind them among authorities civil and military. But in Lorient and Brest and Grenoble, all this was



as if it never had existed ; and Collet kept his mouth well shut about it.

The five years in the prison of Grenoble were coming to a close. Napoleon, too, had come to his tether's end. France was now, in 1818, in its third year under the restored Bourbon king, Louis the Eighteenth. Many of Napoleon's generals had disappeared from the French army ; but the rank and file of officers remained the same, and the army spirit was the same.

One day an officer came to the prison of Grenoble with leave to visit one of the prisoners. Collet, the assistant keeper, was charged to accompany him. The officer, on seeing him, started back. He had been a staff officer of Collet all the time he was playing the part of Inspector-General from Valence to Montpellier. The outcome of his experience with Collet had weighed heavily on his career. In his prison escort he recognised the Count Borromeo whom he had so many good reasons not to forget.

Collet, on the spot, became once more an important man. He was chained up in a cell until arrangements could be made to take him back to Montpellier to stand the



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trial which he had escaped five years before.

At Montpellier nothing new had been learned about him; and Collet took good care to throw no further light on himself. The examining judge had to depend on his old *dossier*—the collection of documents in the case—which had been gathered together at the time.

Collet arrived under strict custody at Montpellier in the beginning of the year. Even in the south the winter was still cold. He was brought to the judge's room for that private mouth-to-mouth inquiry which is still practised by the *juge d'instruction* in the first stages of French criminal procedure. Collet was ushered into the presence of the judge and his *greffier* or clerk by the gendarmes, who took their post at the door. On the table, at one side of which the judge was sitting, was the formidable pile of papers concerning the case of the spurious Inspector-General. Collet was motioned to a seat opposite the judge, who wished to confront him with the documents one by one. Impassive, without a quiver of excitement, Collet drew up his chair.

Suddenly, with one sweep of his arms, he

gathered together the whole collection of papers and dumped them in the fire that was burning in the grate behind him. He seized the tongs and pushed them deeper among the coals. They blazed up merrily before judge and clerk had recovered themselves sufficiently to call for help. The gendarmes rushed in and dragged Collet from the fire by main force. But the mass of evidence so laboriously collected against him had already vanished up the chimney.

Nowhere in the world is the superstition of the documents in the case—each written attestation signed by the respective witness—so rampant as in France. Without the papers which had disappeared in smoke, it would be next to impossible to make up a proper case against Collet. Prefects had been changed and officers separated widely. And what ridicule would be brought on judges and army together if Collet's doings, crowned by this last exploit, should be made public! The case was submitted to the King's Government. It was decided that nothing would be gained by exposing the new régime and the entire French army to the laughter of all France.

The case against Collet as General Count

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Borromeo went no further before the courts. But Collet, the forger, was sent forthwith to serve out the remainder of his sentence in real hard labour at Toulon.

Collet passed these difficult months in silence. He was fitted for the changes and chances of his peculiar business because he had the courage to endure what he could not cure.

At the end of his time he had a disagreeable surprise. He was not freed unconditionally, but was put on a ticket-of-leave, with the strict obligation of reporting himself continually to the police. But in this, too, the authorities showed their respect for his family. They treated him as its black sheep who had disgraced it, while spoiling his own honourable career by his criminal pranks.

Collet's ticket-of-leave restricted him to the little village of Passin, close to Belley. There he lived, with what was left of his family, in comfort never known to his father, who had died in the Revolutionary wars twenty-five years since. He was very conscientious in reporting himself regularly to the police. He perceived that they had strict orders to keep a close eye on him.

One day Collet did not present himself for the report. And the gendarmes, who were sent to take him in his house, could only report in their turn that he had broken bounds. Once more they had to hurry off in hot pursuit. They succeeded in tracing him as far as Toulouse, two hundred and fifty miles away as the crow flies.

After long and useless search, there was recorded duly one more disappearance of Collet from the known universe.

## XI

At Toulouse Collet went straight to the house of the Christian Brothers. This community was in high favour with the Government of the time for its supply of much-needed primary school teachers.

Collet was young enough in years—he was now thirty-three. And he was sedate enough in look to seem to know his own mind. He represented to the superior that he was tired of an irregular life; and he asked to enter the community and become a teaching Brother. He had no worldly ties to keep him in the outside world. He had a little fortune of his



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own. As an earnest of his goodwill, he desired to confide at once to the superior's hands a store of gold and jewels which he carried on his person.

In their dearth of novices, such goodwill was not to be repelled by the Brothers. Collet was admitted, to begin the usual training for his new vocation.

He had time to win the confidence of the community when an awkward thing happened. One of his old fellow-prisoners recognised him one day, and he had to purchase the ex-convict's silence. The demands for money grew constantly. He made up his mind to do at once what he had all along intended to do sooner or later.

A certain Laurent Lajus had a country estate to sell in the neighbouring hamlet of Cugnaux. It was a handsome property, and the Brothers, if they had the means, would gladly purchase it for the community house which they needed. Collet proposed to the superior that the purchase should be made with the money which he had deposited with the community.

The superior had already learned to confide in Collet's business ability, and this spon-



taneous proposition of his made him trust in him more than ever. Collet was appointed to treat with Lajus.

To begin the business, Collet withdrew from the superior's hands the money and jewels which he had deposited with him on entering the community. There might be need of ready funds to make a good bargain. Lajus, when his sale was concluded, although he had been paid nothing by Collet, was so grateful to him that he advanced him 30,000 francs for first expenses. It was, of course, necessary to adapt the newly acquired house for community purposes.

Collet did not finish with this. He went about among pious lay-people who were interested in the Brothers' schools, and borrowed discreetly here and there. Count Lespinasse gave him 15,000 francs; a countess added 20,000 more; the doctor of the community 5000; the archbishop's vicars-general 4000; and so on for a multitude of smaller sums. It came out afterwards that each of the lenders had been bound to secrecy by Collet, and was persuaded that the money was wanted by the community for a temporary need.

It was time for Collet to move on. He

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found a pretext for going to Montauban, thirty miles away. From Montauban he struck directly north to Cahors. By that time he had doffed the Brothers' black gown and white cravat for the dress of a well-to-do man of the middle class. When he did not return and the Brothers took alarm, it was too late. Collet was once more nowhere to be found.

Across country to the north-west, in the department of the Gironde, Count Golo arrived in the little village of Plassac. He was a rich landed proprietor from the department of the Ain, of which Collet's native Belley was a sub-prefecture.

## XII

It was a time when people with money were commonly investing it in land, for land ownership had been changing hands with the upheaval of the Revolution and all the régimes which followed. Count Golo professed to be looking through that part of the country with the intention of buying a landed estate, if he could find any that suited him.

He made friends quickly, and, as usual, had himself passed on from one confiding

acquaintance to another. At last he took up his quarters with the police magistrate Lafond in Roche-Beaucourt, a commune of the neighbouring department of the Dordogne. Lafond's sister, the widow Jeannet whose husband had been a well-known counsellor at law of the Bordeaux courts, had a property for sale in the neighbourhood. She was delighted to find so suitable a purchaser.

Collet named an intendant for the property. He gave enough money to a young man and woman to enable them to marry and enter his service. And he ordered the village church to be repaired at his expense.

To conclude the purchase, it was necessary that he should present certified legal papers to the registrar of deeds. In the old time, before he had ever been put in prison, he might have been equal to furnishing identification papers that would pass muster. But these papers which the new reign of law required of him it was quite beyond his power to counterfeit. He professed to be waiting for them from his native department. Meanwhile he shone with the lustre of his unpaid property. On its credit he borrowed until it became urgent for him to move on again.

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This year and the next Collet was always moving on. He was now at a disadvantage in comparison with the early years in his career. Then he could take refuge under the protecting shadow of great institutions like church or army, and pass long periods in ease and honour. Now he was a private man, and, as often as not when he engaged in his peculiar business, he was called on to give legal proof of himself.

In spite of all, Collet met with uniform success for many months to come. But his natural restlessness increased and his caution diminished. Like Napoleon, his alertness in facing a hostile world was decreasing with his continual stress of mind.

In the spring of 1820 Collet appeared in the important provincial town of Le Mans. In person he was a rich *bourgeois*—one of those middle-class men of means so effective in getting money from people in the new order of things. He gave his name as Gallat. He began operations by renting a house and installing himself in it. Soon after he bought a desirable property. This so accredited him that he was able to sell to the local jeweller, Trolait-Gabant, a distant property of his own,



which, of course, existed only in his own fertile imagination. He managed to obtain several large sums of ready money. Then, when his time had come, he vanished as usual.

But Collet had outlived his time. There was now in France a settled order, means of rapid communication, an efficient police, and, worst of all for him, newspapers. This time the gendarmes followed him up so closely that he could find no crack in the universe—no friendly convent or garrison—into which he might disappear for a time. He was caught and shut up in the prison at Le Mans until such time as he should be ready for trial at the Assizes.

### XIII

The examining judge soon found that he had, not one, but many cases in his hands. All over France, for years, the gendarmes had been coming too late to catch up with some disappearing fugitive from justice. When the newspapers began narrating the latest exploits of Collet, people in distant regions asked whether this was not the man who had relieved them of their own money



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in like manner. When the judge had worked his way backward in Collet's history as far as the prison of Grenoble, he discovered that there were still older records to be raked up. 'Rogatory commissions' had to be sent, not only through France, but also into Switzerland and Italy, which, with Napoleon's fall, had ceased to be administered by France. Light flowed in from every side.

Collet was too good-natured not to help the judge now that he saw the game was up. Open confession, too, was good for his soul. To use his country's proverb, he gained several pints of good blood from others knowing how he had taken in the great and small ones of the world. Confession would also mitigate the severity of the sentence which he was now sure to receive.

The trial came on in November of this year, 1820. The public prosecutor, Gérard, after a long incrimination, lamented there were still so many gaps to be filled in the prisoner's life as known to him. Collet asked permission of the Court to speak.

With great humility, doing credit to the friars who had been his masters in eloquence, he explained in detail what he called the

‘faults’ of his life. Prosecutors and judges, lawyers and the public, thrilled to the succession of dramatic events. Collet did not neglect to insist on the absence of all cruelty and violence from his life. And he spoke modestly of the good which he had done by the way.

One day, for example, when he was Count Charles Alexander de Borromeo, Inspector-General of the French army, he had stayed his triumphal progress at Saint-Vallier on the route to Valence. In the town square a three-year-old child had just been found, with a letter in its little apron pocket to say that its parents abandoned it. Collet delayed long enough to ensure the boy’s future. He deposited 8000 francs of the good money which he had about his person with the mayor, and had it legally registered as the boy’s own. And, before his generalship was so abruptly terminated, he had increased the sum and seen that proper guardians were appointed for him.

‘Perhaps God put the child in my way that, robber as I was, I might begin redeeming myself by charity.’

Collet was sentenced to twenty years at the

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Bagne. According to the custom of those days in France, he was first to be pilloried and branded with a V—for ‘voleur’ (thief)—on his bare shoulder.

### XIV

Collet's twenty years of hard labour were to be counted from his sentence in November 1820. With his usual luck, he was left in the comparatively mild prison of Le Mans until July 1821.

Perhaps those whose money he had taken were still pestering the Court to try to find out what he had done with all his gold. There was never a more idle hope. Nothing was discovered then or afterwards; and we know that gold was at his disposition to his life's end. Indeed, the mystery kept on growing.

At last there were convicts enough to make up a chainful, and Collet had to take his place among the *forçats*. These now answered to what in still crueller times were galley slaves. They had their name because, unlike free citizens, the justice of society ‘forced’ them to an existence of what was supposed to be hard labour, far from the pleasant life of other

men. This began when the convicts, twenty or thirty together, left the prison where they had been tried for their place of punishment.

Collet was marched out to the prison yard with the others. The 'argousins'—police soldiers that shared the ill-fame of the executioner—were at their posts, standing in their dirty blue uniforms with red epaulets and yellow shoulder-belts, and their rifles ready. Between the two files the convicts were driven into the open. There they were stripped and examined by the prison doctors, to see that they were in condition to support the long journey and the punishment supposed to be inflicted at the end of it.

It was rare that any one was declared unfit, and Collet passed with the rest. Like them, he put on the coarse linen shirt and coat and trousers which a soldier threw at his feet. Then, when the list was read out to form the chain, he came forward to his name.

A long and strong iron chain, crossed by short chains at intervals of two feet, lay stretched out on the ground. The convicts were made to sit down on the ground, while the soldiers riveted around their necks the square iron collars or 'carcans' which were



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attached to the end of the short chains. Before Collet was the convict whose name preceded his own in alphabetical order; behind him the one whose name followed. When the order was given, the chainful of two dozen men jumped to their feet together. Together they were huddled on the great open cart which was to bear them to their destination by slow stages. Until then, they would wake and sleep and eat and have all the operations of life in the one human cluster, safely riveted together.

Collet has left no protest against the system, which was to last thirty-three years longer, until the convict colonies of Guiana and New Caledonia were opened. All that we know of Collet under punishment shows him the friend of his companions and the favourite of his keepers. It was another of his principles—never to make things worse than they are by idle resistance.

The chain arrived at Brest, where Collet, in the old times, had been an honoured officer of the garrison. He was to undergo punishment there at the Bagne, which had taken the place of the galleys. The brand of the red-hot iron on his naked shoulder was



verified. He had again to change his dress to the red loose coat, dark yellow trousers, and red woollen cap of the *forçat*. If he had had a life sentence, his cap would have been green. Round his ankle an iron ring was riveted, with a chain to which another convict was bound in like manner.

The Bagne lay below the town of Brest, close to the long, narrow naval harbour. Like the other convict establishments of the name, at Lorient and Rochefort and Toulon, it occupied the old bathing-places. Inside, the convicts were chained each night to wooden benches which served them for beds. During the day they cleaned the docks and dredged the ship basins, hauled and carried stones and timber, with all the other hard work of the harbour. Night and day the infamous *gardes-chiourme* were beside them. The slightest resistance was punished by the bastinado or the dungeon.

All this was the letter of the law for these places of grim punishment; and romancers have drawn on it to thrill our feelings. Collet had already had a short experience of the reality at Toulon. If he had been sentenced as an officer, he would have been sent to

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Lorient, where there was military discipline. But at Brest there was not hard work enough to go round, and the keepers were only too glad to leave their difficult charges to their own devices so long as they made no trouble.

Collet at once became a prime favourite, as he always was everywhere. He had soothing ways and principles from living so long with the clergy—and soon he began giving out his gold discreetly. The ill-paid keepers, who were often convicts that had served their time, willingly took money for themselves; and there were little extras to be bought to make life easier for the convicts.

Collet, portly and placid and the friend of all, was soon known by no other name than ‘My lord Bishop.’

### XV

For five years all went as well as could be in this strange new community into which Collet had fallen. This brought him to 1826, with six years of his twenty already past. Then he was caught receiving a little package from the outside. He does not complain that this was due to ill-nature on the part of some one of

the keepers or a comrade's jealousy. It had always been one of his own defects to grow careless after long impunity.

The authorities could not well pass over the offence. Collet was transferred to the Bagne at Rochefort for the remainder of his punishment.

When he entered his new community, his person was thoroughly searched. Even the help of the doctor of the convicts was called in. Nothing was found on him, neither gold, nor diamonds, nor anything precious.

Things now went ill with Collet for two years and two months. For the first time of his life he was kept under really strict supervision; and all free comradery with his fellow-convicts was denied him. Then, little by little, the vigilance wore itself out and finally ceased. The keepers were only too glad to give him the privileges of the others. And again his mysterious gold began flowing out around him.

In his 'charities' all agreed that Collet was fair and impartial. He held an even hand with the keepers, warned perhaps by his experience at Brest. The years passed, and the authorities recognised that his influence

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was for good. The evil crowd looked up to him with the veneration they might have shown to some chaplain who had succeeded in winning them over.

In 1836 a convict named Jacquemard, whom the keepers had been unable to master, killed one of them. He was to be executed in the Bagne itself. According to custom, all the convicts were placed on their knees around the guillotine. Jacquemard mounted the scaffold and was allowed to say his last words to the kneeling crowd.

‘Comrades,—Do not as I have done. Obey your keepers; they are not cruel nowadays.

‘I thank God and my judges for having given me time to die as a good Christian.

‘I thank you all for your kindness to me when I was in the dungeon.

‘I thank Monsieur Collet principally.

‘Comrades, this is what I wanted to say to you. Adieu!’

This may be taken as the funeral oration over Collet himself. He was greatly wrought up at this time by several printed histories of his career, which had come to his knowledge. He protested against being turned into a man of violence, like Mandrin or Cartouche



in popular legends. As late as the 1st of June 1840, within six months of the time for his release, he wrote to a publisher of his life :

‘Society owes me some good examples.’

At last he wrote his own memoirs, acknowledging whatever the courts had proved against him, and filling the gaps into a continuous history of his life. Very likely he did not tell all—no one ever does.

By a final relapse, he sold his manuscript at the same time to two separate Paris publishers. When both printed, each sued the other for infringement of copyright. Raissac maintained against Bordin that he must have a right to his edition, because he was ‘co-author,’ having mended the style and added numerous moral reflections. On the 30th of November 1837, the Royal Court of Paris decided that neither had any legal right in the case. Collet, as a convict, had lost his civil rights, and was legally unable to enter into a contract.

This is the last appearance of Anthelme Collet in the records of French courts of justice. He had never troubled them willingly. They had spent measureless time and paper on him.



## XVI

At the end of November 1840, Collet was to be a free man again, at the age of fifty-five.

His comrades said it was the excitement of hope after so many years of monotony and despair. His keepers called it the disease of long-term *forçats*. Whatever it was, Collet was taken down with a fever and removed to the hospital. There he lingered to the very eve of freedom. Then, on the 24th of November 1840, he died.

At the very last, when he felt himself going, he said :

‘I have but one regret—to die a convict. Gold—gold—what was the use of it? and jewels so many . . .’

Those beside him listened, but he said no more. They looked, and he was dead.

He had taken with him the secret of his gold, which had provided to the end, for himself and others, better food and linen, and highly prized snuff and books. He had never had a deposit in the hands of the keepers. He had been repeatedly searched when alive ; and never more than the little sums allowed

to convicts had been found on his person. And he had never been without money ready to his hand.

After his death, nine gold pieces were found sewed in his coat collar. They were now called 'louis'—for, since Napoleon, a second Louis, brought in by a second revolution, was reigning—Louis Philippe. And the railway had come—it was no longer Collet's world.

## PONTIS DE SAINTE-HÉLÈNE —COUNT OR CONVICT?

### I

AT the outbreak of the French Revolution a vine-dresser named Coignard was living with his family at Langeais on the Loire. This is the town with the beautiful château which tourists visit nowadays. In March 1791 the new Legislative Assembly abolished all the old trade corporations with their strict rules and left it free to any one to learn and practise whatever trade he wished. The vine-dresser profited by the new liberties to send up to Paris Pierre, the elder of his two sons, aged seventeen, to be apprenticed to a hatter.

For two years and more, while he was learning his trade, young Pierre Coignard had his lodging with a friend of his family named Viguiet in the parish of St. Sulpice. He lived on good terms with Viguiet and his wife,

and in those last days before the churches were turned to other uses, he stood as god-father at the christening of their daughter and signed his name to the church register of baptisms. The Viguiers even allowed him to run into their debt.

The troubles of the country went on growing. The Assembly suspended the King from office in August 1792. The National Convention, which took the place of King and Assembly to govern France, abolished royalty altogether in September; and in January 1793 the head of King Louis XVI. was solemnly cut off. The other monarchs of Europe took alarm, and made ready to invade the dangerous new Republic. Then the Convention summoned every able-bodied Frenchman to arms.

Pierre Coignard, who was coming to the age of manhood, enrolled himself to fight with the rest. Viguiier had influence in his quarter of Paris and obtained Pierre's admission among the chosen grenadiers of the Convention. The life of Paris had sharpened Pierre's wits, and, in the dearth of under officers, he was made a corporal of his squad.

Pierre's morals were not on a level with

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his intelligence. The army had been hurriedly got together, and was made up of all sorts and conditions of men; and there was little discipline among them. Pierre chose to associate with those who were worse than himself. During the years when the commonest French soldier had good chances to become a general—years that saw the rise of Napoleon and his marshals—Pierre Coignard made himself known only as a ‘terror’ of the camps. Comrades and officers admired certain qualities in him. He was always ready for anything. His courage amounted to audacity. He was the first to take a risk and the quickest to get out of it. And yet these good qualities in a soldier never helped him to mount upward.

When the army was through with him, Pierre Coignard came back to Paris, and, with some of his army companions, struck out a new career for himself in civil life. The Viguier saw little of him, and, when they did, reminded him that he was heavily in their debt. At last, on the 18th of October 1800, his doings in his new career brought him up for trial before the Criminal Court of Paris.



There had been a succession of daring burglaries in the city. The burglars either entered houses by dead of night and carried off their plunder while the owners slept or trembled with fright in their beds, or they walked in by day where they knew the owners were absent. Sometimes they broke in, sometimes they used false keys. The Court found Pierre Coignard guilty on a number of these counts and sentenced him to fourteen years' imprisonment at hard labour.

Chained to other convicts, he was haled across France to the Bagne at Toulon. In that ignoble prison which took the place of the oldtime galleys, he served five years of his sentence. Then, one day he found means to escape.

Pierre Coignard left enduring memories behind him, at Toulon as well as in the prisons of Paris, where he had been confined while waiting trial. The authorities looked on him as a man daring to do anything. The underworld of criminals and convicts looked up to him as a natural leader. Until his escape from prison, his career had been vulgar enough. Now there began for him fourteen years of brilliant adventure.

## II

The Bagne was close to the waterside, where the prisoners were occupied at the hard work of the port. When he got safely out, Pierre Coignard lay concealed in the harbour until night came. Then the captain of a little sailing-vessel took him on board. At dawn they sailed for Spain, where the captain landed him on the Catalan coast.

The fugitive looked about for the living which he was sure the world owed him. He learned that a young woman who spoke French was living in a little town near by. He was not long in making her acquaintance.

Maria Rosa, as she was known, was also in trouble. She had been a waiting-maid in great families, and last of all with Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, a French officer whom she tended faithfully until his death. For her good services he left her the little he had ; but she had already been obliged to sell nearly everything when, in her deepest need, she made Pierre Coignard's acquaintance.

Pierre was a man to give courage and confidence, and soon the heart of Maria Rosa

was quite won over to him. They agreed to cast in their lot together, and she remained faithful to him to the very end.

The only object of any value which Maria Rosa still had was an antique casket, in which the Count kept his papers. An art-dealer offered her a good price for it; but Pierre first examined its contents. He found in it papers testifying to the Count's nobility, his commission as an officer, and certificates of his honourable military service.

The Count, of whom little has ever been known, had no relations in Spain, and no near members of his family in France. From the dates of his military record, he may have offered his services to the King of Spain when the Revolution drove nobles of his kind from France. It is possible that his father before him was engaged in keeping order among the South American colonists, who were now and again trying to imitate the United States and France by getting up a revolution of their own. It is certain that the Count distinguished himself in the fighting round Buenos Aires. His health gave way, and he asked to be brought back to easier garrison life in Spain; but he fell into

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a lingering illness on his arrival, and died without having been assigned to a post.

This was not much by way of information; but for a man with Pierre Coignard's intelligence and imagination and experience of army life, it was enough.

Pierre had commanding martial ways and he had been trained for years to military service; and he learned much, then and afterwards, by living among adventurers from every quarter of the world. Maria Rosa had the refined look and manners of the families in which she had served. The two set out together across Spain to the province of Estremadura on the Portuguese frontier, where fighting was going on. They travelled and were henceforth known as the 'Comte et Comtesse de Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.'

### III

Francisco Espoz y Mina, the Spanish general to whom the French count offered his services, was really a guerilla chief in what was so far little more than a war of partisans among themselves. It was the year 1806. Napoleon had not yet entered the field to conquer Spain,



which still counted among his allies. The Spanish troops were used by him to uphold his policy of blockading the Continent against the English. The fighting was caused by the resistance of Portugal, which was under the influence of England.

General Mina did not hesitate to receive into his little army an officer of the experience and good record of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, and he gave to Pierre Coignard, who claimed the name, a post as officer in one of his regiments. The Count, as we must now call him, was thirty-three years old and in the prime of his strength and spirits. He was fitted for such adventurous and irregular fighting. Very soon he so distinguished himself that General Mina decorated him with the green ribbon and fleur-de-lis cross of the order of Spanish knights of Alcántara.

This wild, free life went on for a year and more. History tells how Napoleon was led, little by little, to undertake the conquest of Spain which was the beginning of his undoing. During the uncertain period before hostilities began, the brilliant French officer found means to retire from the Portuguese frontier toward the French army commanded by Marshal



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Soult. With his men, among whom were a few French adventurers like himself, he hastened to surrender. Then, as a good Frenchman, he asked to take service.

There was nothing strange in all this. Other French nobles, after being driven from their native country by the Revolution, had fought in foreign lands and then rallied to Napoleon's standard.

Marshal Soult, like General Mina, was completely taken in by the Count, and made him a major in his army (*chef de bataillon*) on the spot. General Mina's commission and decoration of honour proved his record in Spain ; and no one dreamed of questioning his previous experience in South America or his noble birth in France. Besides, the Count had papers to show in his possession—and then the world, most of all in troublous times, takes a man's account of himself until something happens.

For the next four years Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène was a trusted and honoured officer in Marshal Soult's army. He was particularly valuable in the guerilla war which he liked best. He knew the country and the people, and in this he had a great advantage over most of the French officers. In 1811 and

1812 we hear of him in the important post of Malaga.

In the latter year, Marshal Soult and all his troops were beaten back by the Spaniards, whose army, irregular and ill formed, was made up of men determined to die rather than accept their country's slavery. The Marshal executed a masterly retreat to the Pyrenees. Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène remained behind among troops who were still keeping up a lingering struggle; but the next year all were forced to quit the country with their king, Joseph Bonaparte, the brother whom Napoleon had maintained for five years on the contested throne of Spain.

Pierre Coignard, as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, had now lived seven honourable years in Spain. He returned to France with the good name and high standing of an officer who had served brilliantly all this time.

Everywhere his wife had followed him. Maria Rosa, as Countess de Sainte-Hélène, was all along a help to Pierre Coignard's good reputation with his men, with General Mina, and with Napoleon's marshal. It was her part in the combination, and she played it well.

## IV

Napoleon meanwhile was fighting his way back to France from his disastrous campaign in Russia. The allied armies of Europe were pressing closely on his heels. It was easy for a man of Pierre Coignard's intelligence and experience to see that Napoleon's power was toppling to its fall. As Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène his military services entitled him to some repose. He was scarred with wounds from his Spanish fighting. His youth was passing; he was nearing forty; only five years younger than Napoleon himself. On his return to France, he found means to retire honourably from active service.

In a few months, on the last day of March 1814, the Allies marched their troops into Paris and restored the Bourbons to the throne. Among the first to present themselves to the new king, Louis XVIII., were the Count and Countess Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

The King received them in private audience. He, too, was won over by the Count's military qualities and brilliant career. He expressed his pleasure that the last representative of a noble house of France should be in his service,

and he offered from the royal purse whatever might be needed to enable him to take up his proper position. The Count was presented at Court and welcomed by the returned *émigrés*. The long and honourable service in Spain of the man before them made it impossible to doubt his identity with the young noble who was known to have left France to take service there more than twenty years before.

At the end of February, 1815, Napoleon broke loose from Elba, the island off Italy to which he had been relegated. Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène remained faithful to his new master, and accompanied King and Court in their hurried flight to Ghent. There he attached himself more closely than ever to the person of Louis XVIII. The Countess had been obliged to stay behind in Paris, and the King ordered that ample provision should be made for her.

They had not long to wait. After the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo on the 18th of June and the final return of the Bourbon king to Paris, the couple took their place again in army and Court. They were soon higher in favour than ever.

The King, in person, named the Count a



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lieutenant-colonel of the 72nd legion, in garrison at Paris. Shortly afterwards he was made president of the council board of his army corps. Those who should know said that Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène was on the point of being named an aide-de-camp of the King's nephew, the Duke d'Angoulême, who was first heir to the Crown and had been married to his cousin, the unfortunate daughter of Louis XVI. The few newspapers of the day were under Government control. When later they had to occupy themselves with the Count, they did not mention this, which would have been the high-water mark of Pierre Coignard's rising fortune.

Count and Countess thoroughly enjoyed their good fortune. A handsome house and equipage were taken. They mixed freely in the *grand monde* and entertained largely. The Count, after being made successively a chevalier and officer of the Legion of Honour, was named by the King, chevalier of the ancient royal order of St. Louis. This distinction the Bourbon king reserved for nobles of the old régime, excluding from it those who were nobles merely from Napoleon's creation.

Like many adventurers of his kind, Pierre



Coignard could not let well enough alone. He desired to make sure against whatever might happen. In particular, he might need a birth certificate beyond dispute; and this was wanting to the family papers which he had found in the casket given by the real Count to Maria Rosa. The efforts which he made to obtain such a paper told against him when they were discovered later on. For the present, before suspicion was aroused, his right to the name he assumed had the best possible countenance, better even than the King's favour.

Prévost, who occupied the important position of intendant at the War Office, was married to one of the representatives of the family de Pontis. Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, as a distant relative, asked leave to present his wife. They were welcomed as honoured members of the wellnigh extinct family. This recognition in the face of the world was by itself enough, in ordinary circumstances, to guarantee Pierre Coignard's right to the rank and title he was using.

When the end came, the judges themselves bore witness that, from his escape at Toulon in 1806, until he came back to Paris with the

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King in 1815, and for more than a year afterward, the man known as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène led a life in which all their investigations found no cause for blame. Ten years is a long time in the life of a man.

‘Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower the proud.’

### V

Fortune’s wheel took three years to turn downward for Pierre Coignard : but it was not at the last the fault of his pride alone. During all this time he was running for a fall—needlessly, an honest man would think.

We must look on the remaining events of our story as we look in history on the doings of Robespierre or Napoleon. Only their actions are really known. Motives, plans, measures by the way, and the accomplices are often hid from us. All the cross-examinations of all the judges never brought confession or explanation from Pierre Coignard. He must have found it difficult to meet the prodigal expenses of his new life. And thieves and drunkards are hard to cure, says the police proverb.

Sometime in the year 1816, Count Pontis

de Sainte-Hélène began associating secretly with some of Pierre Coignard's old band. One of them, Lexcellent, who kept a wineshop in Paris, had been his companion in the Bagne at Toulon. Another, Lenormand, porter at the great gate of the Orangerie of Versailles, seems to have owed his place to Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène; and he had served with him in Spain. It is possible some of these old comrades of the underworld had recognised him in his high position, and blackmailed him into joining hands with them once more. His judges, however, were later of opinion that so bold and ready a man must all along have been the responsible leader.

The newly found relatives of the Count, the Prévosts, were proud of so honourable a member of their family. They passed him on to a friend, Sergent de Champigny, chief of division at the War Office, who in turn was proud to become an intimate of an officer standing so high in the King's favour. One day the Count came into the private apartment occupied by Sergent in the Government building. Sergent was busy writing a letter. The Count, while waiting for him to finish, showed a stranger whom he had brought with

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him, the old artistic furniture which adorns the palaces of French ministers. He opened casually the doors of a great carved cabinet, containing the precious gold and silverware that was paraded at the War Minister's dinners.

‘Look at all that,’ said the Count. ‘Sergent is here as if he were the Minister.’

Sergent was flattered, and gave permission to look through the apartment while he finished his work. As they went through the rooms, it was easy for the pair to take wax impressions of the locks. Then they had only to await their opportunity.

On the 11th of December 1816, Sergent de Champigny was giving public audience in another part of the War Office. The Count came early and stayed latest. It was essential to his plans that Sergent should see him, and should not return unexpectedly to his private apartment. Between his bowing-out of one and bowing-in of another, Sergent noticed his friend's presence in the ante-room, and asked if he could do nothing for him. The Count thanked him warmly; he had dropped in on the chance of meeting some one he knew. He was so often at the War Office that his presence excited not the slightest attention.



When Sergent de Champigny finally said good-bye to his friend and got back to his apartment, he found that everything portable of value had been taken—silver and precious ware, jewels and ready money. He saw the Count the next day, and poured into his bosom the tale of woe—the daring robbery which must have been going on while the two of them were together at the public audience in another part of the building. The Count showed the liveliest sympathy, and went with Sergent to the prefect of police and to the public prosecutor's office. To both he protested loudly against the frequency of such crimes in Paris; and he supplemented his friend's account of what must have happened by indications of his own.

Between the two the police followed up so many false trails, ending nowhere, that they had to give up the search. They were no happier in trying to find traces of the burglars in similar exploits which were reported from various quarters during the year 1817.

A small jeweller of Paris, Caretti, received from the band the stolen objects, and found ways and means to get money for them. He also used his acquaintance with the trade to



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learn of likely opportunities. He informed the Count of the presence in Paris of a Spanish general, Pedro Marti, a comrade of the General Mina who had started Pierre Coignard on the way to rank and fortune. He was living in retirement at No. 64 Rue Basse du Rempart. This was a street which has disappeared since 1900, and its last fragment has been replaced by the square named in honour of the English King Edward VII. Its name was a relic of the old ramparts of Paris which Louis XIV. laid low to build the Grand Boulevard.

On the 31st of December, Maria Rosa alighted from her carriage at the General's door and entered accompanied by her footman. It will help to the understanding of many things to say at once that the footman was Alexandre Coignard, Pierre's brother. Maria Rosa presented herself as the widow of a French officer who left France during the Revolution and had been in relation with General Mina.

She came to ask the address of a nephew of the General who was in Mexico. At the time of the visit this younger Mina had already been shot by the Spanish Viceroy for the part he was taking in an insurrection ; but

this was not yet known in Europe. She said that it was necessary for herself and her young daughter to proceed to Mexico, and she would need guidance and introduction if, as she expected, the insurgents were shortly to win their independence. She also asked the address of another Mina, brother of the one in Mexico: he was living in Paris, a fugitive from the resentment of the Spanish King Ferdinand VII., against whose rule all these guerilla patriots had revolted.

The refined air and simple elegance of dress of his visitor impressed General Marti. He had not the desired addresses at hand; but he asked the lady to wait while his domestic went to a friend's house near by and ascertained them. The final indictment of Pierre Coignard, a year and a half later, has this to say of Maria Rosa's visit.

'We have every reason to believe that, while the pretended Countess was taking notes mentally of the inner rooms, Alexandre Coignard was carefully examining the outside. It seems they did not obtain enough information. The next day, 1st January 1818, Rosa Marcen (the name given to Maria Rosa at the trial), still accompanied by Alexandre Coig-

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nard in his disguise as a footman, returned to the General's house under pretence of paying a visit of thanks. She remained a long time alone in his drawing-room, while the General finished dressing.'

On the 18th of January, the General was disagreeably surprised to find that his apartment had been entered and that nearly everything of value in it had been carried away. Among the missing objects were 700 francs in money; his richest uniforms; all his linen and silver, and the three jewelled crosses of his decorations. The police as usual were unable to trace the burglars.

## VI

On one of the first days of May of that year, 1818, the garrison of Paris in full uniform was marched out for review before the King through the Place Vendôme. The regiments issued from the open space around the famous column, which had been erected for Napoleon like the one in Rome for Trajan, and defiled through the street. The crowd standing along the side was able to see near at hand the officers they so much admired.

Among the rest there was a common-looking man who started back as the Legion of the Seine, the 72nd, marched by. Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, Lieutenant-Colonel, was at the head of his regiment. The Count held himself more proudly than ever. The man stared at him with all his eyes and followed after him, keeping even pace. The Count turned to give a command and his overbearing face moved with a characteristic nervous tic. The man at the side of the street seemed satisfied and relaxed his attention; but he did not lose the Count from sight. When the review broke up he still followed after him, and the two arrived at the Count's house in the Rue Basse-Saint-Denis at the same time.

The Count did not observe that he was followed. He had scarcely entered his room when the man rang the door-bell. He was so urgent in his demand to see the Lieutenant-Colonel, who had just entered, that the Count had him ushered in. The man walked straight up to him, holding out his hands.

'Don't you remember me—Darius? We were at the chain together.'

The convicts at the Bagne were chained



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to each other, two by two, day and night. It was a strong and strange bond of union in all the operations of life. Companions at the chain were not likely to forget each other.

Pierre Coignard was taken by surprise and made a mistake. Standing in all the bravery of his uniform, he looked coldly and unmoved at the new-comer. 'You mistake—I am Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.'

The man insisted ; but the Count summoned his lackey, who was none other than his brother, Alexandre Coignard, to put him out of the house. Darius, who had been just released, was in sore straits. A little help to live might have bound him lastingly to Pierre Coignard. As it was, he went away with hatred in his heart, and proceeded at once to the Ministry, which had charge of the police service of the country. There he demanded to see the Minister in person on a matter of the utmost importance, which could suffer no delay.

Count Decazes, who was soon to receive the title of duke, by which he is known in the history of the Bourbon Restoration, was the right-hand man of the new king, Louis XVIII., and held the office of Minister of General





THE COUNT AND THE CONVICT.

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Police. He at once admitted Darius to his presence and listened to his story. He was thunderstruck by this circumstantial and evidently sincere denunciation of one of the King's favourite officers. He was only too glad to shift the responsibility from his own shoulders. Pierre Coignard, if it were really he, would belong to the police; but Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène belonged to the army. He gave orders on the spot that Darius should be accompanied to General Despinoy, who was in command of the military division of Paris and was the Count's immediate superior.

General Despinoy had passed nearly forty years of his life in the French army; its well-being, its good name, was his only passion. As a military cadet he had been the close comrade of the young Napoleon Bonaparte; and he had fought his way upward through all the wars of Revolution and Empire. It is possible there was some little jealousy of this *émigré* officer who had come into the Grande Armée by the back door of Spain. Besides, soldiers are clear-sighted of each other, and, although nothing was said of it in the long trial, there may have been floating suspicions of so

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singular an officer as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène. They certainly never reached the King; for when all was over, although he never allowed the newspapers to mention it, he related to his confidants how completely he had been taken in.

General Despinoy in turn heard the story of Darius about the King's officer, and demanded his proof.

'I have eaten nothing to-day,' was the answer. 'Restore my strength and then confront me with him. You will see for yourself.'

The General handed Darius over to a guard with proper instructions, and dispatched an orderly with the command that the lieutenant-colonel of the 72nd Legion, without delay, and putting everything else aside, should present himself at division head-quarters.

## VII

The Count, in full uniform, soon stood before his General. The General used an old soldier's method to force a confession, if any were to be had.

'Monsieur le Comte de Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, you have played your part long

enough. You are Pierre Coignard, a fugitive convict.'

The Count did not blench, but answered lightly: 'Thank you, General, for the civil status you assign me. Shall I go home and bring my family papers?'

The General was puzzled, but not convinced. He had Darius in readiness, and brought him abruptly into the Count's presence. This time it seemed to him that the Count was moved. Darius repeated his story, clearly and strongly. The Count was not a thoroughbred, and again he made a mistake. He answered back his old prison-mate with loud, angry talk, which became him only as Pierre Coignard.

General Despinoy was himself a count of recent creation, and he had been bred up in camps from his earliest youth. He was not likely to be mealy-mouthed or easily shocked; but his suspicions grew. He ordered one of his staff officers to take two gendarmes and accompany Lieutenant-Colonel Pontis de Sainte-Hélène to his house without quitting him for a moment, and to bring him back to head-quarters as soon as he had taken certain necessary papers.



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Here the General made the mistake. He took it for granted that his staff officer, who was still under the glamour of the Count's past good name and known favour with the King, would be as suspicious as himself. The strictest military discipline cannot make sure of the mind of a man in a situation to which he is not alive.

The officer began by walking ahead with the Count, ordering the gendarmes to keep the regulation distance behind. They talked by the way. The Count complained that, with his known record, attention should be paid to an accusation from such a quarter. The officer was doubtless sincere in assuring him that he quite shared his feelings. All through the trial, when it finally came off, lawyers and witnesses of position showed plainly that they thought it monstrous a convict's story should be allowed to stand against the word of an officer who had served so long and honourably as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

At the Count's house in the Rue Basse-Saint-Denis, the two gendarmes stationed themselves outside the main door giving on the court. The staff officer accompanied the Count to his private apartment upstairs.

The Count presented the officer to his wife, and explained briefly the turn things had taken. Seeing the evident distress of the Countess, the officer assured her that nothing would be easier than for her husband to justify himself, and that they were come to take the necessary papers. The Count said these were in the next room; and he asked his wife to keep the officer company while he was getting them together.

The officer began talking of Spain, where he had served, and the time passed quickly. Suddenly he perceived that the Count was taking the better part of an hour to hunt up his family papers. He asked the Countess politely if she could not hurry her husband, as the General awaited their return. To his consternation, Maria Rosa burst into tears.

Thoroughly alarmed, the officer now knocked at the door through which the Count had disappeared. There was no answer, and he flung it open. There was no one in sight, but a door opposite led into the other rooms of the apartment. The officer hastened through them without finding the Count. Domestics, of whom he caught a glimpse, hastened to get out of his way. He ran down

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the stairs and demanded of the porter if he had seen his master.

‘The Count? He left the house some time ago.’

The two gendarmes had seen a valet in livery passing, but that was all. The officer, not knowing what to think, ordered the gendarmes to accompany him to the General. He did not stop to take leave of the Countess.

General Despinoy listened to the story of the crestfallen officer. It confirmed him in his worst suspicions. He reprimanded the officer with the utmost severity for his breach of orders in allowing the Count out of his sight; and he wound up by putting officer and gendarmes together under arrest in the military prison of the Abbaye. This was the present use of the Revolutionary prison, infamous for its massacres. The police were called in, and, as usual, were unable to find a trace of the fugitive.

So far, it must be remembered, nothing was known of the Count’s connection with recent burglaries. His sudden flight might still have been explained away by the panic into which he had been thrown. He was not the first

officer to dread a searching investigation into a youth passed in those troublous times. Even if he should prove to be Pierre Coignard, so far as was known, he had made his life over honourably. There was still sympathy in store for him, as was shown all through the long months of his trial.

Pierre Coignard, as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, disappeared rather than fight against the accusation of a single man, who was discredited by his condition of life from the start. This was one mistake, and a grave one. As Pierre Coignard, he soon made another mistake which was beyond remedy.

## VIII

Leaving the officer safely engaged in conversation with Maria Rosa, the Count called his valet, who, as we know, was Alexandre Coignard, his brother. He quickly dressed himself in the valet's suit, gave a few hurried directions, and went down the servants' staircase to the court with a package under his arm. He passed into the street without exciting the attention of the gendarmes and took refuge with his old prison companion,



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Lexcellent, the wine-seller, who for two years had been a member of his new band.

A couple of days later, Pierre Coignard, Lexcellent, Caretti, the jeweller who acted as receiver of the band, and another Italian, Saffieri, who had lately lost his place as guardian of the army stores, left Paris for Toulouse. The object of this journey does not appear, but it supplied the band with ready money. Two weeks passed and all came back to Paris, ready for further operations. Pierre Coignard so far does not seem to have thought of fighting for his life as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

Three days after their return, the four went in a carriage to Poissy, a town sixteen miles down the river Seine. They stopped in front of the town bank. Caretti and Saffieri remained in the carriage. Lexcellent posted himself at the door of the bank. Pierre Coignard proceeded upstairs to the private office of the cashier. He had a bag of 2000 francs in gold in his hand, for which he asked to buy a bill of exchange on Toulouse. He poured out the money on the table of the cashier, who began counting it. Hearing a noise, the cashier turned suddenly and saw



that his new client had the key of his strong-box. The cashier jumped to his feet and demanded an explanation.

With his most terrible air, Pierre Coignard said he needed no references. If the bank was unwilling to do his business, he would go elsewhere.

The cashier, thoroughly frightened, shouted 'Help! Robbers!'

Through the open window his call was heard in the street. Pierre Coignard swept his gold into the bag and escaped down the stairs just in time. The two Italians abandoned the carriage and also got away, keeping their pursuers at bay with their pistols. Lexcellent was not so alert, and was taken.

Pierre Coignard hurried back to Paris and went at once to the house of Lexcellent, with whom he had been living. It was in the long Rue Saint-Maur, close to the city gate known as the Barrière des Trois Couronnes. Since then the city has grown far beyond, but the old street has kept its name and runs through what is now the populous workmen's quarter of Belleville. At that time it was an out-skirt of the city, and its small detached houses looked out on the sloping hillside

thickly trellised with vines. Behind the wine-shop of Lexcellent there was an alley-way known as the Ruelle Ferdinand.

Pierre Coignard found Maria Rosa awaiting him at the house. He learned to his great alarm that Lexcellent had not been heard from, and he felt there was no time to be lost in getting away. The two were still busy packing up their things when the police commissary appeared at the street door. Pierre Coignard leaped out of the back window into the solitary Ruelle Ferdinand. The magistrate had some difficulty in getting into the house. He found there only a well-dressed, good-mannered lady to answer his questions.

He asked if she knew a certain 'Carette,' a man who was supposed to be living there. This was the name taken by Pierre Coignard; it enabled him to use a passport issued for Caretti.

Maria Rosa now made the mistake. She professed not to know the man. The commissary expressed his astonishment. His information came from Lexcellent himself, who was trying to throw the responsibility for the affair at Poissy on this unknown Carette, relying perhaps on Pierre Coignard's keeping

out of the way. The commissary demanded Maria Rosa's name. She gave the honoured name which had been hers for a dozen years.

‘I am Madame de Sainte-Hélène.’

Now the authorities had prevented the scandal concerning the King's officer, Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, from reaching the ears of the general public. But the police magistrate happened to be aware of the Count's escape from arrest, although no one yet connected him with the band of Lexcel-lent. An uneasy suspicion that something was wrong arose in his mind. In his haste to have the house searched from top to bottom, he paid no further attention for the moment to the lady he had found in such strange surroundings. His policemen were on guard at the door of the house.

The search was fruitful beyond all the commissary's hopes. Little by little, he brought to light all that was needed by a band of burglars—weapons, masks, wigs, false beards and moustaches, and other disguises. The product of the robberies he did not find. The commissary at once ordered the arrest of the woman whom he had found on entering the house. Maria Rosa had disappeared.

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The policemen swore she had not got away by the street. The magistrate sent his men in every direction along the hillside. At last her bonnet was descried moving among the vine trellises, and she was captured. Her arrest and the name she gave herself, turned the attention of the authorities from the vulgar doings of the bank robbery which had failed at Poissy back to the strange case of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène and Pierre Coignard.

### IX

Vidocq, the famous chief of police who chose his detectives among liberated convicts like himself, was now called in.

François Eugène Vidocq was a man of Pierre Coignard's own stamp, and perhaps had been his companion at some time of their troubled lives. He passed his youth now in one army and now in another, was a deserter and a thief, and wound up as a convict in the Bagne at Nantes. Twice he escaped; but he had not Pierre Coignard's luck and was caught and brought back each time. Then he gave up. He offered his services and the



advantages of his experience to Baron Pasquier, Napoleon's prefect of police.

Pasquier had been a lawyer under the old régime; the Revolution had guillotined his father; and he had his own opinion of the class of adventurers that found their opportunity in all these troubles and wars. He accepted Vidocq's offer, brought him up to Paris, and made him chief of the secret police.

Vidocq had now been eight years at work and he had reached the height of his reputation. In France his name still lives in all sorts of stirring legends and on the stage. In real life, like the gendarmes in the song, he often came too late; but he was in time for Pierre Coignard. It may be a satisfaction to know that many years later, in 1832, Vidocq was himself detected organising a robbery and setting the police on the wrong scent. Their old trade was in the blood of both these men.

The name given by Maria Rosa to the commissary—Madame de Sainte-Hélène—revealed to the police a possible connection of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène with the Lexcellent band. Until then they had been hunting for Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène charged with being the escaped convict Pierre Coignard, on



the one side; and, quite separately, for Carette, who had attempted to rob the Poissy bank with Lexcellent, on the other. There was no need of Vidocq to put the two together after Maria Rosa's blunder.

Misfortunes never come single. Like Maria Rosa, Alexandre Coignard, who had acted as the Count's valet, left the house as soon as the bewildered officer and gendarmes went off to inform the General of the Count's escape. Alexandre at once set about practising his brother's trade on his own account.

At No. 17 of the Rue de la Paix was the bank of Richard Mont-Soyeux. At nine o'clock one night an employé named Petit saw a light in the private office. He tried to open the door, but it was held from within. Suddenly it was flung back, and Petit fell head forward into the arms of a strange man who grasped him by the throat, threw him to the ground, jumped over his body, and rushed into the hall-way. The great door into the street was still open, as is the custom in French apartment houses; but the concierge or porter, hearing the cries of Petit, closed it. Other persons in the house ran from their apartments and found Alexandre Coignard in

the court, crying 'Stop, thief!' as loud as the others.

He begged not to be handed over to the police, and was ready with an explanation. He was of an honest family. He had entered the house to see his sweetheart Adèle, who was a servant there. While he was trying to find his way up the stairs he heard people crying 'Stop, thief!' and he ran down and cried with the rest, for fear of compromising her.

His story did not hold water. The police came and took him off to prison. Whether he too made a mistake and gave his real name, or was recognised as the Count's valet, or was betrayed by Lexcellent, who soon began tale-telling, we do not know. The police, now they were started on the way, set down every burglary that happened to the band.

Vidocq reasoned out the situation in his own mind. No one was in Lexcellent's house when Maria Rosa was arrested; and Lexcellent himself has been shut away under lock and key. So there is no one to warn the Count; and, sooner or later, he is sure to steal back to the house to find Madame de

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Sainte-Hélène, who evidently was expecting him there.

Here, too, it does not seem necessary to be a Vidocq to draw such a conclusion. Perhaps the exploits of detectives in our novels have made us difficult and critical. Or perhaps real life then was too complicated for us to imagine it now. At any rate Vidocq was right.

Around Lexcellent's house, and here and there among the vines of the hillside, Vidocq posted his men when night had fallen. Then he took his own station in the narrow Ruelle Ferdinand which ran under the windows. At eleven o'clock Fouché, one of the detectives, heard some one approaching. He jumped to his feet in the very face of the man they wanted.

'In the King's name!' he cried, seizing him by the throat.

Pierre Coignard was too quick for Fouché. With the pistol which he held ready he shot him through the hand and shoulder. Fouché was a desperate man like himself. He had the strength of will to keep his hold, and shot in his turn. His shot missed, but Vidocq and the others heard the reports and ran to his assistance.



VIDOCQ ARRESTS THE COUNT.







‘Catch the others!’ Vidocq ordered, as he kicked Pierre Coignard into submission.

The marks left by Vidocq’s hob-nailed shoes on Pierre Coignard’s leg were shown by him and gravely discussed at his trial for a particular reason of his defence, as we shall see.

Vidocq was also right in supposing that the man for whom he was lying in wait would not come alone. The detectives surprised Saffieri only a few steps away, before he had time to realise what was going on.

More than sufficient evidence to implicate Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène in the burglaries was found on his person. A fugitive from justice, with no secure refuge by night or day, he still carried about him all that he had taken with him in his hurried escape through Lexcellent’s window. Round his body were wrapped two of those Indian shawls of Cashmere which have always been so precious in Europe; one had been claimed already by the victim of a recent burglary. In the legs of his high boots he had 3200 francs in gold, a gold watch which was also recognised, and—what was most damaging to the good name of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène—the jewelled cross of a military order

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with which General Marti was decorated. It had disappeared shortly after the New Year's visit of Maria Rosa.

A few days later Caretti was found and thrown into prison. Laurence Laurent, the woman in whose house Alexandre Coignard had been living, was also arrested and shut up with the rest. With Lenormand, the porter of the Orangerie at Versailles who was suspected on account of his past relations with Lieutenant-Colonel Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, this was thought to make up the entire band. Each was held in solitary confinement and allowed no communication with any one, not even with a lawyer to defend them.

The all-powerful *juge d'instruction* — the judge who, in France, does the first work on the case—began his inquisitorial examination of the band, one by one. He decided that, first and foremost, it would be necessary to prove that Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène was really Pierre Coignard.

## X

By the French law the judges of the Court of Assizes of the Seine had to decide the

identity of their prisoner. This part of Pierre Coignard's case was not to go before the jury; it had to be settled beforehand. The judges' decision would be final, without possibility of revision or appeal. For evermore it would have force of law, the dreadful authority of the *chose jugée*—the *res judicata* of the Roman law—a case decided for all time by human justice.

Pierre Coignard had had leisure to think during his forty days of solitary confinement. He saw the one great mistake he had made, and, late as it was, he tried to do now what he might have done successfully at the beginning.

Henceforth to the end, he made one consistent effort which he never relaxed—to prove, argue, assert, cry aloud to judges and jury that he was indeed Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, whose name he had borne before the whole world for a dozen years. Perhaps he thought that his other criminal actions might be overlooked if his right to the name which he had honoured in a long public career was finally established. To this he sacrificed even the good name of Maria Rosa—with her consent.

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During all this time, from the denunciation of Darius at the beginning of May to the sitting of the judges in the first days of July, the French War Office and the General Police had been searching everywhere for authentic information about the genuine Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène. The military authorities and police in Spain had given them what help they could. The information thus hurriedly obtained was scant and inconclusive. It was enough to ground suspicion; it was not enough to strip a man legally of the name and position he had borne so long.

The Public Prosecutor took another tack. Since he was unable to prove that the Count was not the prisoner, he tried to prove that the prisoner was Pierre Coignard. It turned out that the man on trial had wellnigh as good proof that he was the Count and not the convict.

The presiding judge in France is charged with the public examination; prosecution and defence have to put all their questions through him. The judge began the sitting, as usual, by asking the prisoner his name and quality.

‘André Pierre de Pontis, Comte de Sainte-



Hélène — Lieutenant-Colonel of the 72nd Legion.'

As he had chosen no lawyer, the Court appointed a barrister—the younger Dupin—to defend him. The case was to win for Dupin at the Paris bar the high reputation still associated with his name. The Public Prosecutor Agier—another legal celebrity in France—opened the case by a statement of the crimes imputed to the man before them and then called witnesses to prove that he was Pierre Coignard.

Antoine Bois and his wife, Jean Vincent, and a Madame de Montigny had been witnesses against Pierre Coignard in the year 1800, when he was condemned to the Bagne. They were again brought into Court; but they were unable to recognise him in the prisoner before them.

Of the other witnesses for the prosecution, all had something to discredit their testimony. Darius and one other declared they had been his chain companions at Toulon; another who had been confined with him at the Bicêtre prison near Paris for a few months, and a gate-keeper of the prison, professed to recognise him after eighteen years' time. The



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general impression was favourable to the prisoner when he insisted that all these witnesses were jail-birds and their evidence open to suspicion.

‘Besides, they are under the influence of my bitter enemy in the police.’ If this was intended for Vidocq, the relations between the two men, whose early lives so resembled each other, must have been closer than ever became known.

The next witness was positive in his recognition of the prisoner as Coignard. He was secretary of the police commissaries at Toulon at the time ; and it was his office to keep the matriculation register of the convicts’ names and their corresponding numbers at the Bagne.

‘What was the exact name you had to write so often?’ asked the judge.

‘Alexandre Coignard.’

‘But the prosecution insists that I am Pierre Coignard,’ said the man on trial.

Things were going ill for the Public Prosecutor. He had nothing else to put in evidence but a painted portrait—photographs did not yet exist—of Pierre Coignard. It had been found among things left by a woman

who had lately died in the prison of Saint-Lazare.

This did not disturb the prisoner. 'It is not unlike me,' he said, looking at it curiously.

Dupin, his defender, now intervened. He asked that the trial might be adjourned until he could confer with his client; also that the latter should be given time to get witnesses from Spain who would prove he was already in military service there while Pierre Coignard was still confined in the Bagne at Toulon.

The Avocat-Général—the barrister for the State in such prosecutions—remarked that, if the prisoner had only stayed to defend himself, General Despinoy would have furnished him every facility to bring witnesses to prove his identity. 'Now there is a presumption against anything he may bring forward.'

The Court was on the point of retiring to deliberate, when a man in the part of the hall reserved to the public demanded to be heard. It was Viguiier, with whom Pierre Coignard had lived when a young apprentice.

'I recognise him—he lived long enough with me. He owes me more than two hundred francs. I know his whole family.

His father is alive and well, and I am amazed he is not here—to defend his son !’

After this strange piece of information, Viguier told his story of young Pierre Coignard owing him money all these twenty-five years. His recognition of the lad of seventeen in the man of forty-four was far from conclusive, but the Public Prosecutor seized on it gladly.

The prisoner answered to the point: ‘The register of baptisms at St. Sulpice must still exist; let the signature which he says is mine be compared with what is known to be mine now. He says he made me a grenadier of the Convention. In that case the War Office must have my description and measurements; let them be compared with my person.’

The Court postponed further hearing of the case, to allow the prisoner to prepare his defence.

## XI

On the 10th of July the judges took up the case again. The prisoner had done his best to find witnesses that would remember they had known him as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène in Spain before Pierre Coignard escaped from the Bagne at Toulon.

The Abbé Lambanet, now superior of the bishop's seminary at Soissons, thought he had seen the prisoner in Spain, but he did not remember the exact year. He could only say of the facts which the prisoner tried to recall to his mind that he would neither deny nor confirm them, as he had only a vague remembrance of things so long past.

Dreuil, another witness, remembered meeting the prisoner in 1812—seven years too late—and hearing from him that he was a French *émigré* from Poitou. But, what was more to the point for the prisoner, he did remember a Spanish officer, Belfort, telling him that he had been serving for fifteen years with Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène — in South America, in Portugal, and then in Spain.

The presiding judge seized this opportunity to ask the prisoner a pertinent question.

‘Why did you say you were from Poitou, if your family is not from there?’

The prisoner had an answer ready: ‘The M. Lanneau who was responsible for my papers may have made a mistake in them.’

The Avocat-Général was holding in reserve some very inconvenient information about his



ill-timed efforts to secure a proper certificate of birth.

‘Unless there are two Counts Pontis de Sainte-Hélène in France, it must have been yourself that wrote to the mayor of Saint-Pierre du Chemin in La Vendée the two letters which I have here in my hands. In the first the mayor is informed that Madame Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, while travelling with her husband, gave birth to a son who was baptised in that parish church; that the writer of the letter is that son and desires a copy of the baptismal certificate. The mayor replied that he was unable to find any such name as Pontis in the parish registers. He then received this second letter, assuring him that the register must have been burned during the Revolutionary troubles; that the law supposes in such a case a new certificate should be made out; that all that is needed is seven witnesses who recognise the applicant for the certificate to be the son of Madame Pontis de Sainte Hélène; and that the signer of the letter has such witnesses ready. In return for the services rendered, he promises to obtain the decoration of the cross of St. Louis for the mayor and an officer’s position



for his son, if the latter wishes to serve in the army. Now, did you write those letters?’

The prisoner was taken by surprise and skirmished for time.

‘My lawyer will answer for me.’

The presiding judge, whose office it was to direct the examination, intervened: ‘Answer for yourself—you alone know whether you wrote the letters or not.’

The prisoner answered: ‘Yes, Monsieur le Président, I did write those letters, and I shall explain later on what it was that forced me to do so.’

The judge insisted that now was the time for explanation. Pierre Coignard had been able for many years to act his part consistently with the family papers which had come into his possession, but he had not the gift of romance—he was unable to make up a consistent story at short notice against cross-examination.

‘Well, Monsieur le Président, I wrote those letters because I knew that I had had a brother who was born in Poitou and I wished to have his birth certificate.’

The judge remarked drily that he had never spoken of this brother before. Pierre Coignard blundered on.

‘My father was a stern, silent man. I doubt if he ever said two hundred words to me. I did not know which of us—my brother or myself—was born in La Vendée. My own son was born at Colmar in the same way while my wife was following me into Germany.’

This part of his story, indeed, agreed with his supposed ‘emigration’ from France. But, with its sudden disclosure of a hitherto unknown wife and child, it cast Maria Rosa out from his life as a French noble fleeing the Revolution. Pierre Coignard must have felt sure that the police had found out her identity in Spain. In reality, the prosecution was more at sea about Maria Rosa than about himself.

The judge passed over for the present all these revelations and ordered the new witnesses for the prosecution to be heard. Their testimony once again was anything but conclusive.

Madame Viguiet, like her husband, declared that she recognised in the middle-aged man the boy of seventeen whom she had lodged; but she was chiefly preoccupied with the money they had lost by him. ‘He owes us more than my husband said. It is not two

hundred francs—it is four hundred francs of the new money, less three livres of the old.’

A keeper of the Tuileries gardens said he had served with the prisoner among the grenadiers of the Convention—twenty-five years ago.

The woman Métras recognised the prisoner as Pierre Coignard, and added, ‘He is a wretch who dragged the young into vice.’ When asked, ‘By what do you recognise him?’ she replied, ‘By his voice!’

Bourgeois, a road commissioner in the civil service, testified that long ago he had lived in the same house with the prisoner.

‘By what name did you know him?’

‘Why, Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène!’

The day’s proceedings had not helped the prosecution. At the last, they had the gendarmes bring forward the witness on whom they counted most—Alexandre Coignard, who was waiting trial on his own account. Naturally, he recognised the prisoner without hesitation as Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

The resemblance in the features of the two was striking; but there the resemblance ended. Difference of life had done its work—the one was of mean presence just as the

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other was commanding. The prisoner had made no difficulty in admitting that his face was not unlike the painted portrait of Pierre Coignard. The judge now asked him: 'Do you know this man?'

'Certainly. Pierre Coignard, with whom the prosecution is determined to confound me, served in my troop in Spain and he died there. This man came to see me after I returned to France. He told me he was Coignard's brother, and asked me to use my influence in his favour.'

To the judge's further question—'What favours could he expect from you?'—the prisoner answered to the point: 'People always ask favours of those who are in a position to grant them.'

Maître Dupin—'Maître (Master),' instead of Monsieur, is the title given to barristers—the prisoner's lawyer, was evidently persuaded that his client was the man he pretended to be, the Count and not the convict. The Public Prosecutor had thus far succeeded too ill to oppose the further postponement of the case, which Dupin demanded in the interests of the defence. The judges gave warning that no further delay would be granted. In



the sitting, which was to be held on the 20th of July, they would decide once and for all whether the prisoner was Pierre Coignard or, as he claimed to be, Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

## XII

The presiding judge opened this final sitting, which was to decide for all time who the prisoner was in law, by asking him to give his own story of his early life. He did his best to reconcile his previous stories and fill up the gaps in the papers of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

‘My parents took me with them to South America when I was four years old. Eleven years afterward my uncle brought me back to France for a time, and then we went to Spain. My mother died in America. In the year 1790 my father got a Spanish commission for me as sub-lieutenant. I remember that he said at the time—My son was born in France in the commune of Saint-Pierre in La Vendée.’

The Avocat-Général interrupted to observe that the prisoner, when making out his military record for the French War Office, wrote that he was born at Chatillon.



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The prisoner replied : ‘ That may have been a mistake of the secretary I employed ; or it may have been my own—I never was a man for keeping papers in order—my life has not been spent at that.’

The judge reminded the prisoner that he had spoken at the last hearing of a wife and child.

‘ Yes, my wife was Maria Moreno—she died in giving birth to our child.’

‘ Are you sure she was not the person you have presented as your wife in Paris ? ’ asked the judge.

‘ Impossible—she died as I said. The name of the person of whom you speak is Rosa Marcen.’

This was the name which Maria Rosa had herself given to the police after her blunder in disclosing her identity with Madame Pontis de Sainte-Hélène. It was her name as a young girl. But Pierre Coignard was fighting in the dark. He had learned from the indictment that the police knew Maria Rosa’s real name. He did not know they had not learned her identity with the waiting-maid of the real Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

The presiding judge passed on : ‘ You say

that your mother was Mademoiselle Linière d'Aubusson de La Feuillade. Now that family is known, and it has no record of any marriage with a Pontis. What became of your father and mother?'

'They both died in America after my uncle brought me back to France.'

Before the hearing of witnesses began again, the Avocat-Général tried to prove that the prisoner bore certain marks on his body which were noted in the register of the Bagne at Toulon as identifying Pierre Coignard. One of the gendarmes declared that the prisoner had lately shown him certain smallpox marks on his leg.

'Smallpox?' answered the prisoner disdainfully. 'They are the marks of the nails in Vidocq's boots, where he kicked me.' And he turned up his trouser-leg to show them. Maître Dupin protested that, for marks of identification of this kind, only a physician's word could be taken.

The witnesses for both sides were as unsatisfactory as ever. Some recognised the prisoner as the Pierre Coignard whom they had not seen for twenty years; one knew him in Malaga (eight years too late) as the Count

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Pontis de Sainte-Hélène who had fought at Buenos Aires. But the presiding judge had a surprise in store.

A letter of the prisoner had been intercepted. In it he instructed the woman Laurence to have certain witnesses testify they had known him as the Count in Spain as early as 1803, when Pierre Coignard was at the Bagne. The letter concluded: 'Be careful what you say to my lawyer. Maître Dupin has entire confidence in me.'

The prisoner at once explained this letter—'I only wished the witnesses to take care and remember the exact dates of the facts they knew about me.'

The Avocat-Général summed up the case of the prosecution against the prisoner. His defender, Maître Dupin, when he rose to reply, surprised both Court and public. He gave a new legal aspect to the case of the prisoner's indentity.

First he furnished proof, good in law, that Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène was born in the city of Soissons during a journey of his parents. He was baptised there in the church of St. Germain, and it was a known fact that the parish registers had since been

burned. The names of the godfather and godmother were known; and, for the baptism, there existed a legal certificate of 'notoriety,' signed by four responsible witnesses before a notary.

'You know, Messieurs,' said Maître Dupin to the judges, 'the force of law which protects the possession of a civil status when accompanied by such a legal act. This is my client's stronghold; you must have other witnesses in law than those now brought forward to drive him from it.'

The defender next reviewed the Count's certificates of military service in South America during the three years 1804, 1805, and 1806.

'You (the prosecution) say that these certificates were given to the prisoner by a woman who had taken them from the Count; and you prove it by a witness who saw her in Malaga, that is, in 1812, when every one knew that the prisoner was the Count. When your witness is asked what name the woman went by, he answers, "Pontès"—a poor guess at Pontis.'

One of the Paris newspapers had indeed surmised that it was Rosa Marcen who gave



him the Count's papers. But the prosecution insisted that Rosa Marcen, the woman known in Paris as Countess Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, was only an adventuress who had come much later into the life of Pierre Coignard. In reality the prosecution had no proof either of her identity or of the real Count's death. 'Pretend if you will,' Maître Dupin continued, 'that some woman gave him these certificates of service. Will you also say she gave him the wounds which are certified in them with the dates when they were received ?

'Here they are — at Buenos Aires and other places, in 1804 and 1805 and 1806, that is, while Pierre Coignard was certainly at Toulon—five sabre cuts around the head; two across the thumbs; one rifle shot in the right leg and another in the upper part of the tibia; and a bayonet thrust in the lower abdomen. The scars of all these wounds the prisoner bears on his person—they could never be effaced. On the other hand, the Bagne registers Pierre Coignard as five feet two inches tall, and the man before you is five feet four! Examine him and measure him.'

The flight of the prisoner when suddenly



accused, and his seeking shelter with Lexcel-  
lent, who had fought under him in Spain,  
were due, said his defender, to panic in  
presence of sudden and new dangers whence  
he saw no issue.

The famous case of the identity of Lesurques  
was fresh in people's minds. He was executed  
in 1796 for a murder still popularly known  
from the play of the Courier of Lyons. Two  
years later one of the undoubted murderers,  
Duboscq, was arrested. His resemblance to  
Lesurques was so striking that the same  
witnesses who had identified Lesurques now  
declared that Duboscq was the man they had  
seen. The Government of the restored  
Bourbons had just given a money indemnity  
to the heirs of Lesurques, but the courts were  
relentless, and the Supreme Court of Cassation,  
as late as 1868, finally refused to allow the  
sentence—the *chose jugée* — to be revised.  
There was great feeling in the matter, and  
Maître Dupin pleaded that no such judicial  
error should be made concerning the identity  
of the accused person in the present case.

‘May it please the Court, during its delibera-  
tions, to order the accused to appear and to  
call on a surgeon to verify that he has no

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smallpox marks; that the signs which existed in Pierre Coignard's body are not found on his person; and that the wounds recorded in the certificates of service of Monsieur le Comte de Pontis de Sainte-Hélène are so found.'

If the case could have gone then and there to a jury, there can be little doubt that it is Pierre Coignard who would have died legally, and Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène would have been proclaimed living in the person of the man on trial. But the judges are not a jury and sometimes have reasons which jurymen may not know.

The Avocat-Général Agier had but two things to weaken the force of Maître Dupin's arguments. Both concerned the unfortunate explanations which Pierre Coignard had been obliged to invent on the spur of the moment under cross-examination.

He had said that his father procured him a sub-lieutenant's commission in the Spanish army. The Avocat-Général now read out a certified statement from the Spanish ambassador at the Court of King Louis XVIII., that the name of Pontis was not found in the register of commissioned army officers in Spain.

It is, of course, possible that the true Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène held a commission only for colonial service in South America, and that his name really does not appear in the regular army list. This would need to be verified, for even the prosecution cast no doubt on the authentic character of the military papers of the Count; they only maintained that these were in the possession of the wrong person, namely, Pierre Coignard. But this intervention of a foreign ambassador must have been asked directly by the King, and it starts up a suspicion, confirmed by what followed, that on this turning-point of the case judgment was to be delivered, as Zola formulated it for Dreyfus—‘according to orders.’

It was very inconvenient for the King to have a noble officer, a known personal favourite of his own, convicted of burglary, and the disgrace to his army would be lessened if it could be proved that the criminal was all the time only an ex-convict masquerading as a count. But it was not easy to prove that the Count of the present had been a convict in the past.

The other defect in the prisoner's story was

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connected with his pretended 'emigration' from France during the Revolution, and his presence in Germany when his newly discovered wife was dying. He had been obliged to give dates, and he no longer had the Count's papers in his possession; and his dates and the papers did not agree.

The Avocat-Général, if he had spoken before a jury of ordinary men, would have injured his case by his dodging answer to one of Maître Dupin's strongest arguments.

'How can you explain,' said the latter, 'an escaped convict from Toulon becoming suddenly able to fill the post of a high army officer in time of war? He might be naturally brave, but military skill can come only from the long and hard training of experience.'

The reader must explain it as he may. The Avocat-Général had only this to say: 'He first deceived the Spanish military authorities. Then he tried it with the French—but they found him out!'

The Court, without paying further attention to the conclusions of the defence, followed the prosecution and decided: 'The identity of the accused person with Pierre Coignard is legally established.'



The prisoner was scarcely beginning to understand the full force of this decision, that henceforth and for ever he was to be the escaped convict, doomed, if only because of his escape, to perpetual confinement in the Bagne. For the first time he realised that something more than liberty had perished for him, that the brilliant adventurous life which he had won and kept by so many years' exertion was for ever lost.

In the face of his judges he cried aloud: 'God shall call you to account for your judgment—I appeal from it.'

The will to live on, even in prison, as the Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, whose life he had lived so long, was strong in Pierre Coignard. The law of the *chose jugée* was stronger—and it was beyond appeal.

### XIII

The question of the identity of the principal accused party was out of the way. The whole band had now to be tried at the Assizes. The secret 'instruction' of this part of the case dragged on for nine entire months. At last, on the 22nd of June 1819, the hearing of the



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case was begun before the Court. It had long since become the talk of all France.

Pierre Coignard allowed no sign of discouragement to appear in his person. It was noticed that he wore long side-whiskers, after the new fashion of the day. He bore himself with his old upright, martial air; he had the same commanding look and voice. Maria Rosa sat modestly by, and every one remarked that in its extreme simplicity, her dress had all the elegance of other days. She listened with lowered eyes, and the sympathy of all went out to her. Maître Dupin had handed over the defence of Pierre Coignard to a colleague, that he might himself take charge of the interests of Maria Rosa at the trial.

From the beginning there was trouble with Lexcellent, whose lawyer hurried on the proceedings as if they had a foregone conclusion. Pierre Coignard suspected that Lexcellent, to spare himself, was doing him the utmost harm. During a deliberation of the Court, the two men engaged in so fierce an altercation on the prisoners' bench, that the gendarmes had to separate them by force.

From the presiding judge's first question Pierre Coignard refused to answer to any

other name than that of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène. The judge insisted in vain that he was obliged to go by the *chose jugée* of a year ago. He was forced by the prisoner's obstinacy to compromise, and address him only as 'the first accused party.' The judge asked him to moderate the violence of his speech.

'What would you have? I talk like a soldier. I shouldn't have done so many brave deeds if I had been a lawyer. And now I am made a scapegoat for bandits that persecute me. I do not speak of Monsieur le Préfet de Police!'

Anglès had been the Prefect of Police all along. Pierre Coignard may have meant as before to charge Vidocq, ex-convict like himself and now chief of the secret police, with personal animosity toward him; but we shall never know the strange relations that had existed between these two men. The presiding judge promptly silenced him. It is like the sudden opening and shutting of a door that for a moment lets in a ray of light on the course of justice in that still unsettled time.

A new witness came forward and proved

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again that the prisoner was not a thoroughbred, since he had never learned to hold his tongue. It was a prisoner who had been confined with Pierre Coignard in these last months in the great Paris prison of La Force—there where the Princesse de Lamballe and her companions had been so cruelly massacred in the Revolution. Pierre Coignard called his attention to a part of the great wall around the prison yard: ‘Do you see that—it was made higher for me—I mean for the Coignard who they say I am. He nearly got over it once.’

As a matter of course, the other hastened to curry favour with the prison authorities by telling what he had heard. It happened to be true.

In this trial there was no element of doubt, as there had been when there was question of Pierre Coignard’s identity. His share in the burglaries and his leadership of the band could not be disputed. His defender was now Maître Millot, who directed all his efforts to working on the sympathies of the jury. The sentence of the judges could not in law go beyond the jury’s verdict.

As an escaped convict Pierre Coignard was already liable to hard labour for life at the

Bagne. But the Public Prosecutor was not satisfied with this. He demanded a verdict of homicide against the prisoner for shooting, in the struggle over his arrest, Fouché, the secret service policeman. For this, although Fouché had not died of his wounds, the sentence would be death by the guillotine.

Perhaps, in higher quarters, it was thought desirable to be thus safely rid of the man for ever. He had for years deceived all the authorities from Napoleon's generals to King and Court. He had won their honours, and the discovery of the truth about him reflected on the good sense and good order of the whole régime. And perhaps Vidocq, as Pierre Coignard insisted to the end, was pushing the prosecution to demand a capital sentence for reasons of his own.

The jurymen were not like the judges. They were impressed by the prisoner's personality. They seem not to have been convinced that he might not really be the Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène, as he protested he was at every moment of the trial. He spoke to them in his own defence, and told over what he had done and suffered in the service of his country—brave deeds which even the



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prosecution did not dispute. And he tore open his clothes to show his breast all covered with the scars of old wounds.

There was not a member of the jury who had not been bred up in the wars of the Revolution and Napoleon. Some bore wounds themselves from these wars. They thrilled to the prisoner's words and refused to follow the prosecution. Their verdict convicted Pierre Coignard as a member of a band of burglars; but they refused to take into consideration the prosecutor's additional charge of homicide. And they acquitted Maria Rosa altogether.

Lenormand was also acquitted. He had fought with the prisoner in Spain, and owed to him in France his post as keeper of the Orangerie gate at the royal palace of Versailles. During the trial he asserted that the gaps in his military record had been deliberately filled up by the council-board of the army corps over which Lieutenant-Colonel Pontis de Sainte-Hélène presided.

‘You know,’ shouted the prisoner, aflame to defend his military honour, ‘that I had nothing to do with it. I was no longer president of the board. I was training and forming the Legion of the Seine.’



Lenormand, when he was brought into Court to be informed of his acquittal, could think of nothing better than to cry—‘Vive le Roi! Long live our princes!’

Maria Rosa only wept.

Pierre Coignard, Alexandre Coignard, and Lexcellent were next brought in together. Lexcellent, seeing that he was associated with the leading criminal, broke out in frightened protestation of his willingness to make every revelation possible to avoid his fate. He became quiet only when he heard that his sentence was but for five years of prison.

Alexandre Coignard weakened in like manner, and cried to the judges that he too was ready to denounce the guilty parties. Pierre Coignard, before he could be stopped, spoke up peremptorily: ‘It was Caretti that brought you into this business.’

Alexandre was cowed and muttered—‘Yes, if it had not been for Caretti, I should not be here.’

He too was sentenced to five years of prison.

During this trial also Pierre Coignard had won the sympathy, if not the esteem, of his defender. Before sentence could be pronounced on him by the judge, Maître Millot

managed to inform him of the jury's verdict and the necessary consequences.

‘ Ah ! It is because they have decided I am Pierre Coignard. Well, I must make up my mind to it.’

The presiding judge proceeded to sentence Pierre Coignard to imprisonment for life at hard labour—the Bagne—with that previous exposition before the whole people, which now took the place of the old pillory. The judge, as usual, went on to give the condemned men notice of their right to appeal (but the appeal was at once rejected); and then, with some emotion, he exhorted them to accept their just punishment.

‘ Unjust !’ cried Pierre Coignard ; ‘ I shall never forgive your decision depriving me of my name.’

Thus for a last time he protested publicly that he was Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène.

#### XIV

Here we should naturally expect an end would have been put to this case, with its strange mixture of real crime and pretension almost as real. Any surmises of undue influence which we may have formed, can only be

strengthened by the unexpected action taken by the relentless Public Prosecutor.

Maria Rosa was not released. She was held on a new charge, which brought her under the jurisdiction of the police court. It was intended evidently to land her in prison after all. She was accused of aiding and abetting the escape of Pierre Coignard, by obtaining for him a false passport made out in the name of 'Carette.' For this crime the Public Prosecutor demanded that she should be condemned to five years of prison.

The people of Paris were beginning to take inconvenient interest in what looked like persecution beyond measure of law and under orders. They had no intention of allowing the verdict of their jurymen to be set aside by an artifice of arbitrary authority. Trial by jury had come in with the Revolution, and they did not intend the restored Bourbons should undo what had been done.

The police judges prudently threw out the new charge—on the ground there was nothing to prove that Maria Rosa knew the criminal nature of her action. So she was set free at last—free to devote herself for the rest of her life to Pierre Coignard.

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A curious sidelight is thrown on the ways and means of justice in those days, by other dealings with the band. Alexandre Coignard, who had promised to tell everything he knew, was taken from prison and placed under police supervision only. Caretti and Saffieri seem not to have been imprisoned at all. These two, with Lexcellent, who was too notorious to be let off at once, by their revelations had made the conviction of Pierre Coignard for burglary possible. Even they had been unable to give proof that he was not Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène. Only Maria Rosa could do that—and she did not speak.

Pierre Coignard was started back to the Bagne at Toulon in the chain with other convicts. All Paris flocked to the Bicêtre prison to see him off; and a like curiosity brought out the people of the towns through which the long double file of men chained together passed in its journey across France. It was noted that he still bore himself erect with all his old pride of mien. It was something to have seen such a man, who had deceived generals and kings—but first had fought bravely.

In Paris, it was published in the official



papers that, when the convict chain reached Toulon, all the old inmates of the Bagne immediately recognised Pierre Coignard and welcomed him back from fourteen years of a life that might well have changed him beyond recognition. Also, that the registration measurements of the convict when he was thirty years old agreed exactly with those of the man now that he was forty-five.

The people of Paris asked why the prisoner's challenge to the judges, when they were deciding his identity, had not been taken up, and the old and new measurements compared in presence of his defenders. They were more than ever of opinion that something must be wrong. The details of the case faded from popular memory; but it helped to swell the universal tradition that the sentences of justice might be influenced from higher quarters.

## XV

Pierre Coignard had the strength of body and soul to live on year after year in the prison which shut him out from the wide world of his adventures. A man like him does not write memoirs, not even



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false ones to sell, as Vidocq was charged with doing. Before his death he had time to learn—for such news penetrated into the prisons—that Vidocq, while still a policeman, had been caught red-handed in a robbery organised by himself. Vidocq was let go because of his past work for higher authorities and, in freedom, long outlived his old enemy, who had been safely shut away in prison by his means.

Pierre Coignard died past sixty, a prisoner of the Bagne. All that time Maria Rosa had kept near him in Toulon, for her first use of her liberty had been to follow on after him. The rules of the Bagne—and, with time, the relaxation of the rules for old prisoners condemned to a life sentence—allowed her to comfort him in many ways. She had shared his adventures and grandeur, and she was faithful to him in his fall. She had the consolation of waiting on him until his death. Then she too disappears from further memory of men.



THE MYSTERY OF THE TEMPLE PRISON.



# THE STORMY LIFE OF CHARLES OF NAVARRE

THE MYSTERY WHICH WAS THE INTRODUCTION  
TO THESE ADVENTURES

LOUIS CHARLES the Dauphin, son of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette, King and Queen of France, was taken to the prison of the Temple with his father and mother and sister on the 10th of August 1792. Louis the Sixteenth was guillotined on the 21st of January 1793. For those who held by the divine right of kings, the Dauphin now became Louis the Seventeenth, King of France and Navarre.

On the 3rd of July 1793, Louis Charles was separated in his prison from his mother and sister, and they saw him no more. He was given into the exclusive care and company of the rough and debauched prison-keeper Simon and his wife. As he was born

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on the 27th of March 1785, he was barely eight years old when this new education began for him. Its effect was distressingly evident when he was made to bear disgraceful witness against his mother, Marie Antoinette, at her trial, just before she was guillotined on the 16th of October 1793.

On the 19th of January 1794, the Simons left the prison of the Temple. Immediately, all was changed for the boy, whom they handed over as the imprisoned Dauphin. He was encaged in a dark room of the Temple tower. There he was seen by no one except the relays of four men appointed to watch over him by the Commune of Paris; and these saw him only through the bars of the door. He is said never to have spoken to them. After the 1st of September, there was another change, and he was put under medical treatment. At last it was officially announced by the Revolutionary Government that he had died on the 8th of June 1795, when a little more than ten years and two months old.

The fact that the boy, who died in the Temple prison in 1795, was really the same as the Dauphin Louis Charles, who had been



committed to the prison in 1792, was not verified at the time, at least not satisfactorily, by the Convention, which then ruled France. The fear and disorder of the Terror were not yet over, and for a time there was no public expression of doubt; but it was shortly whispered about that the real Dauphin, or Louis the Seventeenth, was not dead at all. It was said that devoted partisans, thanks to the Simons, had succeeded in taking him from his prison by substituting a sick boy in his place. And it was the death of this false Louis the Seventeenth which had been officially announced by the Convention.

It is certain that the wife of the prison-keeper Simon told a story like this, privately first, and publicly afterwards. She persisted in it before the police in 1816, after the restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, and until her own death years later. A Vendean woman, Françoise Desprez, who had been a secret messenger of the Royalists to and fro Revolutionary Paris, also stubbornly maintained that she herself brought the boy, who was the real Louis the Seventeenth, to the Royalist General Charette in La Vendée in the summer of 1795.

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The next heir to Louis the Seventeenth, who had officially died, was his uncle, the elder of the two brothers of Louis the Sixteenth. When the Revolutionary Government announced that his nephew was dead, he at once proclaimed himself King of France as Louis the Eighteenth; and he named Charette 'General of my Catholic and Royal Army.' He was generally recognised as their king by the Royalists; for neither they nor he could have had any knowledge of the Dauphin's survival at that time.

From 1795, when Louis the Seventeenth was supposed to have died in prison, the succession of governments in France is the following: the Convention, which had guillotined the King and Queen and governed during the Terror, certified the death of the Dauphin in its last days; it was replaced by the Directory at the end of the year 1795; the Directory yielded to General Bonaparte as First Consul at the end of 1799; Bonaparte became Emperor Napoleon in 1804; in 1814, Louis the Eighteenth came back as king a first time, and, after Waterloo in 1815, reigned in France until his death in 1824; he was succeeded by his brother Charles the Tenth,

whom the Revolution of 1830 replaced by King Louis Philippe. The police of all these governments had to occupy themselves with 'lost Dauphins' claiming to be the still living Louis the Seventeenth. They began appearing here and there in France, and in Italy and Germany and Holland—and even in America. This went on for fifty years and more until, if Louis the Seventeenth really escaped and survived, he must have died of old age.

Numberless pamphlets and books have been published since then about the question, citing all sorts of documents and witnesses. At two different times—under the Second Empire and the Third Republic—measurements have been made of the skeleton found in the grave where the boy who really died in the Temple prison was supposed to be buried. All this has led to persevering doubt of the fact that Louis the Seventeenth died in 1795, and to more or less well-founded belief in his identity with some one of those who pretended to be the lost Dauphin. The doubt has been strengthened by the behaviour of the two persons most closely concerned—King Louis the Eighteenth and the Dauphin's sister, who

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was released from the Temple prison after the announcement of his death.

This still burning question goes beyond mere history. Curiosity, sympathy, loyalty to a lost cause—and of late a money speculation—have united to keep it alive. At this late day, the claims of descendants of one of these lost Dauphins have been made the occasion of a speculative attempt to deprive the family of the Duke of Parma of the millions which they inherit as the heirs of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette. A report favourable to these claimants was presented to the French Senate in 1911; but the Senate declined to act in the matter. Since 1900 alone, more pages have been printed and more archives ransacked to solve the mystery, than during the whole hundred years that followed the death or disappearance of Louis the Seventeenth.

Our Charles of Navarre may or may not have been the lost Dauphin, or any one of the other personages—or, indeed, all of them—with whom he has been successively identified by the Courts and the public opinion of his time, and by later students of the documents in his case. But the adventures of Charles of



Navarre are beyond dispute; and they are pleasant and touching, and instructive and grotesque to a degree possible only in the topsy-turvy years that followed the French Revolution.

He was the first 'lost Dauphin' to have his claims sifted by hostile police and Courts under a pressure of public opinion which even Louis the Eighteenth did not dare to withstand. The official accounts published at the time may be legitimately suspected. Madame J. de Saint-Léger has just printed—in 1911—a bookful of carefully selected documents, copied exactly from police and Court archives; and we are informed that these are only the twentieth part of the collection of documents extant in this case of Charles of Navarre, and now in her possession. Her documents vary in many points from the official accounts, and they put a different complexion on the trial and the conclusions of the Courts (see further references in Note 1, *The Causes Célèbres and the Documents in the Cases*, page 389).

This story of the certain adventures of Charles of Navarre was already prepared when these new documents appeared; but the many



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necessary changes have been made, and are here duly acknowledged in consequence. If the reader wishes to learn further the probabilities of Louis the Seventeenth surviving, and his possible identification with our hero, he must go to Madame J. de Saint-Léger. Her book is henceforth an obligatory introduction to any authentic knowledge of lost Dauphins.

Here we have only to follow a queer life year by year as we know it. The story has thrilling gaps, and these must be filled in by the historian's or the detective's imagination. The one is not the same as the other—and the reader can exercise himself in both.

### I

In the autumn of the year 1795 a boy, looking ten or eleven years old, was presented by the Vendean Generals de Châtillon and Scepeaux to Charles de Turpin, a young noble who was fighting with them. Their bands formed a part of the little Royalist army of Charette. The Revolutionary troops were closing in on them and it was necessary for them to get out of the country at once. The most they were

able to do was to keep up a scattering guerilla war.

The generals said that a farmer of the neighbouring town of La Pouèze had asked them to see the boy was taken care of. The farmer professed not to know who he was, and said the boy had sought food and shelter at his house. It turned out later that other officers and soldiers among the Vendean troops were accustomed to seeing the boy around their camp, and had already been curious as to his identity.

The boy was asked his name. The only answer to be had from him was—‘I am a *petit de Vezins*.’

Now this might mean either ‘a little boy from Vezins,’ which was a village not far away, or ‘I am a little de Vezins,’ that is, one of the children of the noble family de Vezins, which belonged to that part of the country. The Royalist generals and their farmer evidently wished the boy’s answer to be taken in the latter sense, which was not at all improbable.

In fact, the Baron de Vezins, who was the head of his family, had fled with others of his quality to England before the Revolution began cutting off the heads of the nobles.

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The desperate attempt made by the Royalists to hold out here in La Vendée, where the people were devoted to the King, increased the disorder; and it was not wonderful that a child should be lost in the hurry and confusion of the times. At any rate, there was not another de Vezins left in the country to say whether the boy belonged to the family or not.

The aunt of Charles de Turpin was the Vicomtesse de Turpin de Crissé, a widow much beloved by the country people. She had ventured to remain on in her château of Angrie when the other nobles fled; and so far the Revolution had not reached her door. Her young nephew was greatly interested in this lost boy. He knew that the Baron de Vezins had a nephew of the same age, and he took it for granted that the lost boy was he. The generals, who were in a hurry to leave that part of the country, asked him if his aunt would take charge of the boy until the family should be able to do so. Madame de Turpin was only too glad to receive young de Vezins among her own children and to treat him as one of them.

The boy accepted mutely his lot as a 'little

de Vezins.' Neither the Vicomtesse nor her two daughters, nor her mother Madame Bongard de Remy, nor the nephew Charles who was with them when not in his guerilla service, noticed anything in the boy's language and manners to make them think he was not a child of as good family as the de Vezins. For a few days, as Madame de Turpin remembered more than twenty years later, she thought he handled his knife and fork and napkin awkwardly ; but she set this down to his timidity.

After a time, news came that two ladies of the de Vezins family had died in their exile. The boy wept and spoke of a girl who survived. Madame de Turpin thought the dead ladies were the boy's aunts and the girl his sister. She was not surprised when the boy said that Charles de Turpin might very well marry the girl when she came back, and that he would use his influence to bring the marriage about.

Time passed and the Revolutionary or Republican troops advanced into the country, nearer and nearer to the château of Angrie. Charles de Turpin was with the wandering Royalist bands. His aunt thought it prudent



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to seek safety for herself, her mother and her daughters, in a hiding-place in the depths of the forest. The little de Vezins she left with her *garde-chasse*, the forester who was still supposed to guard her hunting-grounds as he had done under the King, when such lands were reserved for the exclusive use of their noble proprietors.

Here the boy remained until the whole country became a skirmishing-field in which the two parties chased each other back and forward. At last there was a fight in earnest, with killed and wounded, at a place called La Croix Verte.

The boy had always shown great intelligence, and he kept his eyes and ears wide open. He learned the particulars of the fight, and disappeared from the forester's hut. He took a sabre with him and rode away on a horse of one of Madame de Turpin's farmers, without any one noticing what he was about. He made his way along the countryside between the troops of the two parties who were pursuing or dodging each other everywhere; and he reached safely the forest refuge of Madame de Turpin. He allayed her anxiety by giving her news of what had really happened, par-



ticularly that her nephew had escaped safe and sound to the Royalist headquarters at Noyant.

General Charette was taken and shot on the 29th of March 1796 ; and, by the next July, the Republican General Hoche succeeded in establishing peace in the country. Madame de Turpin returned to her château, and things went on as before. At the end of 1796 she learned that the Baron de Vezins had ventured to come back to France, although the *émigrés* were still proscribed. She hastened to get word to him that his nephew was well, and was being brought up with her own children.

To her amazement she received a reply thanking her for her well-meant kindness, but informing her that she had been imposed on. His only nephew had been living with him in England all the while, and he was still there.

Madame de Turpin hardly knew what to do, and she was not helped by the boy she had befriended. Now and afterwards he seems to have taken mutely these sudden revolutions in his existence, as one accustomed to have things happen to him.

At last it occurred to some one that, when the boy on his first appearance described himself as a *petit de Vezins*, he might have meant

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simply that he was a little child belonging to the village of Vezins. Then, when others misunderstood and made a little noble of him, he slipped easily into the new part which Charette's generals evidently expected him to play in Madame de Turpin's family.

Generals and Royalist troops were now out of the country, and nothing was to be had from them ; and the farmer who first interested himself in the boy seems to have disappeared with them. So the boy was taken over to Vezins, and the town-crier, in the public place, summoned all and sundry to come forward and see if they recognised him.

At this point of our story we have little knowledge of what happened next. The documents which were really before the Court in the case when it was tried in 1817, twenty years later, are not at all as conclusive as the official reports of the trial made them out to be.

Madame de Turpin then thought she remembered that a woman of Vezins professed to recognise the boy, and said his name was Bruneau. At that trial also, in 1817, a woman, whose maiden name was Bruneau, was called to testify that the prisoner at the bar was her brother. She and her family belonged to the

village of Vihiers, which is some miles from Vezins. Her brother, Mathurin, born on the 18th of May 1784, had disappeared from home when a boy of fifteen, that is, in 1799, or two years after the boy of Vezins left Madame de Turpin.

In spite of the intimidation exercised over her by police and Court, she and her sister and her husband (for she was already married at the time) 'were not as affirmative in their depositions as could be wished'—according to the secret report which was made to Louis the Eighteenth's Minister of Police Decazes, and has been found by Madame J. de Saint-Léger.

The prisoner who was being tried was our Charles of Navarre. He acknowledged readily that he was Madame de Turpin's *petit de Vezins*; that he had allowed himself to be passed off as the nephew of the Baron de Vezins; and that he knew well the Bruneau women. But he denied to the last that he was their brother, although he acknowledged he had made use of their family name later. No one spoke of explaining how a boy of eleven, brought up to the wooden-shoemaker's trade among rude villagers in a wild country, as the Bruneau boy had been, could pass

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himself off for a little noble during more than a year in the family of Madame de Turpin.

What is certain is this. After it was found out that the boy was not the nephew of the Baron de Vezins, he was taken from Madame de Turpin's château to live with Jeanne Bruneau, wife of René Delaunay, innkeeper and wooden-shoemaker at Vihiers. After a time, Madame de Turpin had him brought back to live with her in the château of Angrie, either because she was really interested in the boy or because the Bruneau woman did not wish to keep him. This time Madame de Turpin no longer treated him as one of her own children; she put him to serve in her kitchen and to take care of her dogs.

The domestics, who had been obliged to respect him before, made the boy feel the change in his condition. He also seemed to turn a deaf ear to Madame de Turpin herself when she counselled him, as she remembered afterwards, to conform his behaviour to his lowly state of life.

After some months, well on in 1797, Madame de Turpin decided to send away altogether the child who behaved so strangely. She ordered her *garde-chasse*—the same who



had sheltered the boy while she was in hiding in the forest—to take him back to Vezins, and to leave him there. This was done, with no little unkindness on the part of the *garde-chasse*, as the boy remembered when he was a man.

He was taken in once more by the Bruneau woman; but he would not bend to the rough training which her husband Delaunay tried to give him. So she made up a little bundle of his things for him, and he went out alone in the world again. Neither then nor afterwards did the Bruneaus seem to think there was anything extraordinary in this. At the trial, the judge tried to lessen the improbability of such callousness toward a brother of tender age, by making him out fifteen years old at the time. Brother or not, the boy went to the house of a Madame Cassin, who had known him as the little noble de Vezins; and he left his bundle with her, to be kept against his return.

From that time, in the summer of the year 1797, until six years later, nothing was heard of the whereabouts, the goings and comings, of the *petit de Vezins*. The Bruneau women neither saw nor heard from him. Madame de Turpin troubled herself no more about him.



## II

At the end of this summer of 1797, a boy of apparently some twelve years of age was taken up by the gendarmes at Hottot, a country place of Normandy in the department of La Manche. They found him wandering about without any settled habitation, and they were so struck by his appearance that they brought him to the central authorities in Cherbourg.

The police, all along this coast of the Channel, were looking out for Royalist *émigrés* who had fled the Revolution and were now secretly getting back into France; they were credited with all sorts of plots against the new order of things, and England was supposed to be aiding and abetting them. The boy had a refined look and dignity of manner which were unusual in a vagabond. The police authorities were suspicious that he might belong to some important Royalist family; and, in that case, the Directory which now ruled France would be glad to know of his presence in the country.

To all their questions the boy answered

with great composure that Hervagault, a tailor of Saint-Lô, which is a town of La Manche, would make himself responsible for him. Hervagault was sent for, claimed the boy as his son, and took him away with him to Saint-Lô.

Not long afterwards the police of Bayeux, farther up the Channel, reported a new arrest of the same boy. This time the authorities refused to hand him over to Hervagault, who came to claim him as before, until the boy had been brought back to Cherbourg for further examination. There the central administration decided to put him on record once for all as the son of Hervagault, tailor at Saint-Lô; and this was to be henceforth his official *état-civil* or civil status, that is, his officially registered name and origin.

In France it has always been very difficult to change this official registering of a person, once it has been made. For legal purposes, it is next to impossible to go behind it, very much like the *chose jugée* or judgment of a Court which nothing that is discovered after can revise or change. Nowadays, when by some mistake a child that is really a girl has been registered as a boy at its birth, there is

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all the trouble in the world when the child reaches its twenty-first year, to persuade the authorities that it—or she—is not really a man trying to dodge the compulsory military service.

If the authorities at Cherbourg thought they were going to save the Government of the Directory trouble by making the mysterious boy who was their prisoner the official son of Hervagault, a Saint-Lô tailor, they were mistaken. The tailor and the boy went off together; but next year the police found the boy again far away to the east, at Châlons on the Marne.

This time the authorities had reason to be suspicious. The boy was ostensibly wandering about by himself; but he was known to have received the hospitality of families whom the Government suspected of conspiring to bring back a king to France. The police pretended to have evidence that the boy was obtaining money and help under false pretences, which is a kind of *escroquerie* or swindling, and falls under the law. In May of this year 1799, the boy was sentenced to a month's imprisonment until they should know what to do with him.

The police of the Directory were particularly struck by one thing. The families who had given a welcome to the wanderer, when they were asked to explain, insisted that they were interested in him only as they might be in any likeable boy. The suspicious police found they overdid this when their interest went to the extent of getting the boy legally certified from Cherbourg as the son of Hervagault, the Saint-Lô tailor. But they did not know what scent to follow. Some said the boy had talked of the Duc de Valentinois and might be his illegitimate son ; others thought he might be the legitimate son of La Vaucelle or Longueville or Ursel, for he had talked of these *émigré* dukes also. A few whispered there was a greater secret still.

Hervagault the tailor seemed the most disinterested of all in the matter, for he did not take the trouble to come before the Court to bring his official son home ; he only sent word that he was willing. The Directory was in its last days, without consistent authority and already trembling at the shadow of Napoleon Bonaparte, who was the master of the hour. The friends of the strange boy seemed very desirous



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that Hervagault the tailor should have the boy ; but the Court, in August, settled suspicions for the present by sentencing him to confinement in a house of correction for two years.

One puzzle even the Court did not profess to clear up. When first arrested in 1797, on his examination at Cherbourg, the boy was reported to be about twelve years old ; and so now, in 1799, at Châlons, he should be fourteen, as indeed he looked to be. Unfortunately the parish register of Saint-Lô gave the 20th September 1781 as the date of birth of Jean Marie, the real son of the tailor. According to this, the boy ought now to be a young man of eighteen. It is rare that appearances belie such a difference in age in the growing years. But no explanation was forthcoming from the Court or its documents.

Things were worse yet in 1801, when the boy was released from his prison. If he were really Hervagault, he would now be a man of twenty ; but he looked barely sixteen.

Napoleon Bonaparte as First Consul had taken France in complete charge ever since the end of 1799, and the country more than ever looked to him to bring back settled law



and order. For he represented the strength of the Revolution and not its weakness, and he had no particular need to tremble at every rumour of Royalist conspiracies. Indeed, he was inclined to make easy the return of the *émigrés*, and many of them were rallying to his side. But the boy who was officially to bear the name of the tailor's son Hervagault somehow, like Banquo's spirit, would not down.

His friends in the department of the Marne were faithful to him and welcomed him back from prison. He soon had veritable headquarters in the town of Vitry-le-François. Among old families still sighing for their King, it was passed from mouth to mouth that Louis the Seventeenth was alive. They discovered the Bourbon look and ways in this boy who was officially Hervagault. He was invited eagerly to city homes and châteaux: and behind closed doors churchmen and nobles and men and women who regretted the old régime, paid him the honours due to the 'Dauphin.' So far as is known, he was the first to be so recognised after the supposed death, six years before, of the Dauphin Louis Charles, or Louis the Seventeenth as he would have been if he had reigned.

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First Consul Bonaparte was busy with more pressing things than a lost Dauphin in a remote province. He had just signed the peace of France with the Pope by the Concordat, and with England by the Treaty of Amiens; and he was making sure that his First Consulship, which was to have been for ten years only, would be prolonged for life. His police made short work with their Hervagault.

By 1802, he had been brought up again before the Court, this time at Vitry, on the old charge of getting his living on false pretences. The Court ruled out all mention of what every one knew, that the gifts showered on this persecuted boy were intended for the 'Dauphin.' It also dispensed, like the Court at Châlons two years before, with the presence of the Saint-Lô tailor Hervagault or any testimony he might offer. The boy officially named Hervagault was sentenced to four years' confinement in prison.

The next year, 1803, it was thought well to publish *The History of the False Dauphin* in two volumes. But, for some strange reason, its long documentary account of his appearance and adventures with the police and his various Court trials made people more suspicious than

ever that the Hervagault of the Courts might easily be what he claimed to be—the true Dauphin who had officially died in his prison, but had really escaped from it.

### III

In this same year 1803, when Hervagault was beginning his second year in prison, the Bruneau women at Vihiers near Vezins received a letter signed ‘Mathurin Bruneau.’ It asked for a little money. It was dated from the house of correction or prison at Saint-Denis, where the writer was confined as a tramping *imbécile*. He also asked for a certificate that he was an honest citizen; it would help him when he should get out of prison. The younger sister sent him twelve francs, and the husband of the elder made out the certificate. Whoever he was, he gave no further sign of life to the Bruneaus until Napoleon was out of the way.

At the trial in 1817, the judge brought this up. Charles of Navarre answered simply—‘I received the money but not the certificate.’ Doubtless the prison authorities had intercepted and suppressed it.

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For two years and more we have no document concerning the existence of any lost Dauphin; and the police reports of the Empire seem never to have mentioned the name of Bruneau. Hervagault should have been serving his time in prison. In 1805, at the end of the four years to which he was sentenced, not Hervagault, but Bruneau bobs up in the French navy. The fact was stated by the judge and made known in the official account of Charles of Navarre's trial; and he admitted it without difficulty. In a police report of 1818, Madame J. de Saint-Léger has found the particulars.

François Joseph Maître, 'sergent des bombardiers,' then declared that, in October 1805, he was in the 4th regiment of the Naval Artillery and sailed in the frigate *Cybèle* from Lorient across seas. He remembered very well that there was an apprentice cannoneer named Bruneau in his own detachment; and this Bruneau, whose first name he did not know, was with them on board the *Cybèle* for eleven months, and arrived with him at Norfolk in America some time in September 1806. He heard afterwards that Bruneau deserted there with other marines. Bruneau must have been



at that time, so far as Maître remembered, eighteen or nineteen years old.

This scrap of information would be of scant importance if it were not for what Charles of Navarre had already told of such a voyage. He said that Fouché, Napoleon's Minister of Police, had him brought from Saint-Denis to the Paris prison of the Conciergerie, where he saw and examined him. Then the gendarmes took him and passed him on, from brigade to brigade, until he reached Lorient, where he was embarked in the *Cybèle* on All Saints' Day (1st November) 1805; and he had deserted at Norfolk, as Maître said. But he defied the Court to find in the navy registers that he had ever signed an enlistment, either as Mathurin Bruneau or by any other name.

'I was treated like the Duc d'Enghien,' added Charles of Navarre.

In fact, when a prisoner at Saint-Denis, he was in charge of Savary, the chief of Napoleon's private police who, in 1804, had carried out the arrest and execution of the Duc d'Enghien.

The name of Bruneau does not appear again in any official paper, whether of navy or prisons or police, from the voyage of the *Cybèle* in 1805 until 1817, nearly two years after the

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arrest of Charles of Navarre. Then it came out quite by chance ; and we shall see how eagerly the police authorities seized on it to fix an identity on their mysterious prisoner. But the name of Hervagault reappears almost at once, as we shall also shortly see.

So far as we can get the events in order, the young deserter Bruneau, when he left the port of Norfolk in Virginia in 1806, at once set out on foot to find a Frenchman to whom he had been recommended. This was a former counsellor of the Parliament of Paris named Payen, who had left France because of the Revolution. He was living in 'Frederickstown' (the city of Frederick in the State of Maryland).

Charles made his way by boat and on foot to Richmond where he found a Frenchman of Rochefort, who had set himself up as a pastrycook in that city. By him he was passed on to Alexandria and Washington, whence at last he reached his destination. The severe Monsieur Payen received Charles with great respect and, when he was rested, took him to a rich American merchant of Water Street in Philadelphia.

(The prisoner who copied this name spelled

it by his French ear 'Whatrlhrie'! Charles made him write out its meaning in French—*rue de l'Eau.*)

The two men put their heads together and decided that he should be placed for the present with the priests of St. Sulpice, who had also fled from the Revolution and opened a school in Baltimore. There Charles was known by the name of Auguste Dufresne; and he seems to have met General Moreau, Napoleon's rival, who was living in exile in the United States.

He pretended, in the account which he dictated in prison later, that he lived in Baltimore with a Monsieur de Vitecoq until the arrival of a Monsieur Delatour, who brought him a letter summoning him back to France. He said the letter was signed by the Vendean General de Châtillon. This was the general who, at the beginning, left the *petit de Vezins* with Madame de Turpin. If true, this recall to France can only be referred to the year 1807, in which Hervagault reappeared.

(It is worth noting again, for the gaiety of English readers, that the prisoner who wrote this account for Charles from his dictation

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spelled the name of the captain of the ship *Ariette* of Philadelphia—‘Z’imzompson.’)

### IV

At the end of 1807, the year following Bruneau’s desertion from the *Cybèle*, when Charles de Navarre says he was recalled to France, the Imperial police learned that Hervagault had been seen in Paris. Next they heard he had been passed on again from one Royalist family to another, first to Anjou and then to La Vendée, where his presence might be dangerous. They soon arrested him there, sometime in 1808, and forced him to embark as a marine on a ship leaving Lorient for the colonies. By a curious coincidence the ship was the *Cybèle*, the same frigate on which Bruneau had been embarked as an apprentice cannoneer not three years before.

In the official reports of the trial of Charles of Navarre, the Court took occasion to assert publicly that in the navy register he was inscribed as Mathurin Bruneau; and it kept silence as to any connection of Hervagault with the man it had decided to call Bruneau.



The police authorities, however, gave it their anxious attention.

This piece of knowledge we owe to another document found by Madame J. de Saint-Léger; and this was quite unknown to the contemporary account of the *Causes Célèbres*, for the reason that every reference to Hervagault was carefully excluded from all reports published of the trial of Charles of Navarre. The information was sent to Decazes, Louis the Eighteenth's Minister of Police, by one of his secret agents.

On board the *Cybèle*, when it sailed from Lorient in December 1808, the surgeon-major, Robert, had his attention drawn particularly to a marine soldier named Hervagault. He learned that Napoleon's Government had given positive orders that Hervagault should be shot if the frigate fell into the hands of the English.

Hervagault was touched by the interest which the surgeon took in him. One day he confided to Robert that, if their ship were captured, 'my lot and yours would be assured.' The surgeon felt bound to tell him the orders which had been given for such an event, and he recommended the dismayed Hervagault to fight his best if they were attacked.

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They were soon given chase by the enemy and Hervagault astonished every one by his fearlessness and bravery under fire. When the frigate was beyond the enemy's reach, the captain said so that others might hear: 'This young man has merited ten times over the cross of the Legion of Honour; but I cannot ask it for him without compromising myself.'

The frigate *Cybèle* was forced to turn back, and it took refuge in the little port of Sables d'Olonne in April 1809. As they were nearing land, Hervagault made known to Surgeon Robert that he was really Louis the Seventeenth. 'If I had told you sooner, you might have thought that I wished to interest you in my lot. I can tell you now because I no longer stand in need of your protection, and you ought not to doubt the truth of what I say.'

In fact, to the surgeon's astonishment, when they left the ship the common marine Hervagault took him to various farmhouses and châteaux in the neighbouring Vendean country. Everywhere they were received with exaggerated hospitality and mysterious demonstrations of respect.

At that time no one in France was quite sure how Napoleon would end or what might come after. Surgeon-major Robert kept his own counsel; but he noted carefully all he had seen and heard lest he should forget. He heard no more of Hervagault; but in 1817, he was an 'aide-major' of the 3rd regiment of the Guard in garrison at Rouen where Charles of Navarre was being tried. The Court was insisting that the prisoner was none other than Bruneau. Surgeon Robert learned that the prisoner had narrated as facts happening to himself incidents like those which happened to Hervagault in his own company. This made him curious to see the prisoner, and he found an opportunity to examine him near at hand while he was taking refreshment in the Court-house during a recess of the trial.

The lawyer to whom Robert owed the opportunity was a certain Maurice, who was nominally charged with the defence of Charles of Navarre, but who was really in the pay of the police.

Surgeon Robert said to him as he duly reported to Minister Decazes: 'That is the marine Hervagault whom, in 1808 and 1809,

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I knew on board the *Cybèle* ; the captain had orders to have him shot if the frigate were taken by the English.'

After this landing in La Vendée in 1809, we lose sight of Hervagault for a time until the Imperial police got him in their hands again. He had friends and followers scattered here and there all through the Royalist country, but he had no organised party to make him a present danger to the Imperial Government. So, to prevent talk, he was once more given a form of trial. The judges were amazed at the dignified assurance of their prisoner ; and they were troubled by the quality of the public which gathered in the Court room. They washed their hands of the case by having the prisoner legally pronounced crazy.

Napoleon's Minister of Police, Fouché, now ordered Hervagault to be committed to the lunatic ward of the Bicêtre prison at Paris. In 1810, Savary, who had had to do with Bruneau and had since been made General and Duke of Rovigo by Napoleon, succeeded to the place of Fouché. He announced officially that Hervagault died in the Bicêtre on the 8th of May 1812.



## V

During the years following the official death of Hervagault, Charles of Navarre was certainly once more sailing the seas and wandering in the two Americas to and fro the seaports. For this we can trust his own statements to his judges, the more so as they were confirmed by a witness from the United States whom he recognised at his trial. They agree also in substance, though not in time, with the account of his life which he dictated or allowed to be compiled for him while he was in prison.

This account (which we also owe to Madame J. de Saint-Léger) was written before any one tried to identify Charles of Navarre with Hervagault or with Bruneau, the marine who deserted from the *Cybèle*. To avoid bringing up these inconvenient memories, it was necessary to make a jumble of the dates.

Charles of Navarre said to the judge that, in Philadelphia and New York, he tried thirty-six ways of getting a living—from cutting wood to grooming horses—but he had not been a coachman. When he left New York he went to Madeira; and there the judge

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insinuated he had engaged in the slave trade. This will come up again in our story, thirty years later, as a last mystery in this life of so many puzzling revolutions.

In another interrogation of the judges about the crape which he had been seen wearing on his hat in France, Charles answered that he had been lawfully married in North America, and that his wife, dying, had left him a son. So romance too had touched this wayward life—for Charles of Navarre, when he came to make himself known, was every inch a sailor rolling from port to port and with a sailor's tongue in every language.

In the later years he had been much in Brazilian ports; and this again helps to the understanding of thirty years later. He told the prison authorities that he was in Rio Janeiro in 1815, when he heard of Napoleon's downfall. And he sailed on the spot for home—to what end we shall soon see.

Meanwhile, Emperor Napoleon had been fully occupied with his unlucky campaign into Russia and its consequences. Here and there wild hopes had been stirring the hearts of the few who believed that Louis the Seventeenth was alive and would yet come and reign.

Outside of France, the enemies of Napoleon knew only of Louis the Eighteenth as a possible king to come. In France the time was Napoleon's for a little longer; and with him still—

‘The Kings sit down to dinner, and the Queens stand up to dance.’

## VI

It was the last days of September 1815, three months after Napoleon had become the life-long prisoner of the English, and Louis the Eighteenth was seated finally on the throne of France. In the little village of Varennes on the Loire, not far from the city of Saumur, widow Phelippeau was busy in her baker's shop. A youngish man of thirty or thereabouts entered and asked for wine and something to eat. The widow eked out her subsistence by selling food and drink and little articles of wearing apparel to such passing travellers.

She did not recognise the new-comer. He was clean but poorly dressed, like a sailor, with a sort of sandals on his feet. He lingered after paying her for what she had

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served. Just then her young daughter happened to come into the room and the stranger took her by the arm. The mother reprimanded him for his familiarity. To her amazement he spoke still more familiarly to herself.

‘So Mère Phelippeau is as bad-tempered as ever.’

‘Mère’ means ‘mother,’ but it is used by Frenchmen familiarly for any elderly woman. An old neighbour named Fraimbault was a witness of what was going on. The word perhaps struck him, for he started up exclaiming: ‘You must be Charles Phelippeau!’

The man seemed taken aback and answered: ‘You are mistaken, but I am a friend of his.’

Charles Mathurin Phelippeau was the eldest of the widow’s six children and would have been twenty-seven years old at the time. He was brought up a baker like his father, but he had to go with the rest of the youth of France to serve in Napoleon’s armies when he was only nineteen. His family had given him up for dead, as they had had no news of him for nine years, ever since his first year of service. His last letter was dated from Valladolid in Spain.

The stranger remarked that when Charles



left Varennes his father was still alive; which was true. The widow's suspicions were aroused, and when the stranger, who was in knee-breeches, asked for a pair of garters, she refused to sell them to him. He turned to her daughter and said: 'Do thou then give them to me!'

Now French people 'thee-and-thou' each other only when very familiar. Something in his way of pronouncing these words struck the mother's heart, and she declared he must be her long-lost son. But he would only say: 'No, I am a friend of his.'

Fraimbault was so sure that, when the young man said he needed a 'louis' (which was still twenty-four francs), he put his hand in his pocket and gave him half the amount in two pieces of six francs each. The mother insisted on his remaining with them, and he accepted willingly enough. She, too, gave him money, which he made no difficulty in taking; and she and her daughter were persuaded that he was indeed Charles Phelippeau. He would never talk about his past history, but contented himself with saying that his name was Navarre and that he was an American citizen.

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They asked him to explain what had become of young Phelippeau, since he professed to know him. He answered : ‘ He was taken prisoner in Spain and then he went to the United States.’

He refused to give any further explanations, and seemed annoyed when the others insisted. The widow at last tried to make him understand that he could not go on living as he was doing. He answered moodily : ‘ I know what I have to do.’

One morning at the end of October, the strange young man was not to be found. No one at Varennes had seen him go away, and nothing could be learned of his whereabouts. He had with him one hundred francs and a gold watch which the widow had given him a few days before. A sailor who passed through Varennes, hearing the inquiries, said he had met such a man in Nantes and refused to buy a watch, which he offered for three louis. After a month, a letter came to the widow Phelippeau; it was signed ‘ Charles de Navarre ’ and said she could write him, by Saint-Malo, to the Channel island of Guernsey, which then, as now, was British territory. It gave no further explanation.

This is the first time the name 'Charles de Navarre' appears in any document of the case.

## VII

On a later day in that same month of November 1815, Jeanne Bruneau, wife of René Delaunay, innkeeper and wooden-shoemaker at Vihiers, near Vezins, was standing at her counter. A strange man, thirty years of age or so, entered and asked for a bottle of wine. He told her to set out three glasses, for he wished herself and her husband to drink with him.

The woman was greatly astonished at the request and looked closely at the new-comer. She thought she recognised in him the features of her brother Mathurin, who had disappeared many years before when a young boy. To her agitated questions the man made only one answer.

'No, I am not your brother ; I am Charles de Navarre.'

The stranger stayed with her for a day or two and wished to pay for himself. She refused to accept anything, for he was surely her lost brother. Her husband was not so

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certain about it. It was he who had taught the boy to make wooden shoes ; and the boy left them because he did not get on with his brother-in-law.

The stranger asked after the younger Bruneau sister, who was now married to a man named Plumelle. It was she who, a dozen years before, had sent the twelve francs in answer to a letter signed ' Mathurin Bruneau,' and dated from the house of correction at Saint-Denis. She also thought the new-comer must be her lost brother, and wept over him. He called her ' Mathurine,' a pet name of her childhood, and comforted her. But he denied that he was her brother.

The stranger said he must be on his way and spoke of going back to America. He hired a horse and rode away across country toward Fontenay in La Vendée. This town he called ' Fontenay-le-Peuple,' the name to which the Revolution had changed ' Fontenay-le-Comte' of the old régime. He had not yet learned that the old name had been restored along with the Bourbons. He went straight to the house of a lady named Cassin. It was she who had given shelter for a time to the *petit de Vezins* when he set out on



his wanderings after leaving the château of Madame de Turpin. She remembered him; and she had kept his little package all these years. But the Bruneau sisters and Delaunay seem not to have connected, then or afterwards, this episode with their brother's life.

### VIII

It was a few days after his disappearance from the Bruneaus that 'Charles de Navarre' sent word to widow Phelippeau he was going to the island of Guernsey. This name, as has been said, had never yet appeared in any police reports, not in those concerning Hervagault, and not in the navy record or prison register of Bruneau. It did not particularly strike police-officer Petit in the port of Saint-Malo when, on the 9th of December following, he arrested for lack of a passport a strange sailor claiming the name.

In fact, 'Charles de Navarre' might be just a family name without any particular significance, or it might be a princely name and title—'Charles of Navarre'—like 'Edward of Wales' for example. The man was dressed like a common sailor and pretended that he

was an American citizen from New Orleans. He said that he had accidentally lost his passport, issued by the Government of the United States. With his other papers, his money and various possessions, it had been carried off by the Guernsey boat, which he had missed. The man seemed confused, as one who had been drinking.

To the policeman's amazement, the wretched individual before him, when he found he was not to be let free, pulled himself together and declared that he was really Charles of Navarre, son of Louis the Sixteenth. And he insisted that his 'uncle,' actually reigning as King Louis the Eighteenth, should be communicated with at once.

In those troublous times no one could tell what was going to happen. The police-officer felt obliged to bring the matter to the attention of the police lieutenant-extraordinary, Pierre, who cross-questioned the man. He maintained what he had said, and then suddenly refused to talk any more about himself.

Lieutenant - extraordinary Pierre soon learned that his prisoner must already have been talking in his cups—for the people of

the port and surroundings had begun saying that the lost Dauphin was found. He was now thoroughly alarmed lest news of so strange an adventure should get to the King before his own official report could reach Minister of Police Decazes in Paris. He anticipated the regular post by the curious method of air-signals which was then called the 'telegraph.' The Convention had set this up and left it to the governments that came after. When it was once started going, twenty minutes was enough time to get a short message through one hundred stations.

It was the 17th of December when Count Decazes, in his turn, was startled by the news of this apparition of a Louis the Seventeenth. Emperor Napoleon had got rid of Hervagault. After the official announcement of his death a noise, indeed, had been made about two other lost Dauphins—one named Persat, who turned out to be an old soldier, and another who was a Lyons mason named Fontolive. But they showed themselves so ridiculous that doubters suspected the Emperor's police of inventing them to discredit any more talk about the Dauphin's survival.

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This was the first time that King Louis the Eighteenth had to face popular agitation about the possible existence of a Louis the Seventeenth, who would, of course, be the only legitimate King of France.

At Saint-Malo, during the next few days, the prisoner, in a fumbling sort of way, tried to evade the responsibility which his sudden pretension to be the lost Dauphin had brought on him. He said the money he had lost was supplied him by the Consul of the United States at Nantes; but the Consul denied knowing him. Then he smuggled out of his prison a letter to the English Governor of Guernsey, asking him to notify His Britannic Majesty of his arrest. The Guernsey dentist named Talbot, into whose hands it had been given, turned it over to Police-Lieutenant Pierre, and he promptly imprisoned the go-between—a Saint-Malo woman who sold food in the gaol.

Then the prisoner handed to Lieutenant Pierre in person a letter to King Louis the Eighteenth himself, asking to be brought to Paris for examination. This letter had been written for him by another prisoner. To the end he refused, as Hervagault had done before



him, to write or sign any piece of writing in his own hand.

What went on in the prison was sure to be known in the town. Soon townspeople and peasants began crowding outside the prison gate; and more than once the cry was raised—*Vive le Roi!*

But—

‘Who may be Pretender and who may be the King,  
Why, Lord bless my soul, that’s quite another thing.’

## IX

The neighbouring sub-prefect at Fougères next took alarm. Fish-sellers from Saint-Malo had spread the news in the market-place, and he asked himself and his superiors if there was not some underhand conspiracy going on.

Charles of Navarre was not so guarded in his speech among his fellow-prisoners as he had been with the police. He told one of them—a woman who must have been a police spy—that he had learned how to bake in widow Phelippeau’s shop at Varennes on the Loire.

At once, the sub-prefect of Saumur was asked to look into the story. To the great relief of the police authorities, the sub-prefect

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was soon able to inform them that Charles of Navarre was very certainly no other than widow Phelippeau's son. He gave a long account of the man's visit to his mother's house in October.

The authorities at Saint-Malo rid themselves of so compromising a prisoner by forwarding him, on the 4th of January 1816, to the Prefect of the Department at Rennes. The Prefect, Count d'Allonville, questioned him in English and in French; and he reported to Count Decazes that the man spoke with great difficulty and very incorrectly. But he did not appear to be crazy; and he continued speaking invariably of Louis the Eighteenth as 'my uncle.'

For the police and the Prefect, the prisoner had now to be Charles Phelippeau; and he was not yet twenty-eight years old. He astonished the Prefect by telling him he had been with General Charette's Royalist troops in the Vendean war of the Revolution. He mentioned in particular the fight at Les Aubiers, which is about twenty miles from Vihiers, and fifty from Madame de Turpin's château.

'Why,' said the Prefect, 'you cannot have

been more than nine years old at that time.' Phelippeau would have been but eight.

'Oh no, I was past ten,' answered the prisoner. This would have been the age of the Dauphin; Mathurin Bruneau would have been more than a year older.

To Minister of Police Decazes the matter did not seem clear. He gave orders that the adventurer who gave his name as Charles de Navarre should be taken under safe escort to the prison of the Bicêtre at Rouen. There he was to be kept from all communication with the outside. Prefect d'Allonville had asked that he should be brought up to Paris, which seemed more natural.

On the 29th of January, Charles of Navarre, accompanied by the gendarmes, arrived at Rouen. Minister of Police Decazes may have thought to avoid exciting the people of Paris. He only succeeded in stirring up worse agitation around the prisoner at Rouen.

## X

Count Decazes, who is known to history by his later title of Duke, was having just then another strange experience of lost Dauphins.

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His office was that of Minister-General of Police; but he was also known to be the right-hand man of King Louis the Eighteenth in the newly restored Bourbon monarchy. Whatever immediately concerned the King was brought before him first of all.

In the village of Gallardon, in the grain region of the Beauce back from Chartres, there lived a farmer named Thomas Ignace Martin. In his days of solitary toil, he thought over many things which were whispered around him. The Revolution was over; Napoleon was safely shut away in the island of St. Helena; and a king of the old line was back on the throne. But people could not settle their minds to a humdrum existence after a quarter of a century of excitement. Every one was on the lookout for something to happen, Farmer Martin with the rest. His expectation was rewarded.

On the 15th of January of this year, 1816, while Charles of Navarre was still at Rennes, Martin was at work alone in his fields. Suddenly a strange being on outstretched wings hovered in the air above him. Except for its wings, it had the look of a handsome young man, something over five feet tall, with





THE VISION OF FARMER MARTIN.



a shining countenance, and dressed in a long-tailed coat of bright yellow, reaching to his heels. On his head was a white high hat, of the clumsy shape then worn; and the peasant noticed that he wore shoes tied with strings instead of ribbons, which was also a late change of fashion.

This mixed the apparition of an angel, which has been common enough in French popular history ever since Joan of Arc, with an untravelled peasant's idea of the Court dress of the time.

The angel bade Martin go up to Paris to the King and warn him of impending danger. He was to tell the King his vision and reveal to him, from the angel, that only one remedy was left to save the throne and France from new disasters. This remedy was to keep holy the Sunday, with an honest police for all the people high and low.

In this too there is nothing but a mixture of ideas of a lonely farmer who listened to the Sunday sermons, and the rest of the week went brooding over all the evils he had seen.

At first Martin, peasant farmer, did not

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dare to take so great a mission on himself. But it became a fixed idea, leaving him no rest; and the angel followed him up with so many apparitions that at last he yielded to the supernatural impulse. He went off to Paris and, like every one else who had to deal with the King, he asked audience of Count Decazes.

It was doubtless not the first time the Minister-General of Police had listened to queer stories of the kind. He tried to wash his hands of further trouble in the matter by placing the visionary peasant in the hospital service of Dr. Pinel.

This was the great physician who was introducing into France humane methods of dealing with mental disorders in place of the old cruel treatment of lunatics. He was the worthy predecessor of Dr. Charcot who, in our own times, has let in so much light on fixed ideas and self-suggestion, and all the other labels which we now apply to cases like that of Farmer Martin. Dr. Pinel did not have all these resources, and he ended by ordering the peasant of the angel to be put under observation in the Bedlam at Charenton.

Martin did not grow crazier in the lunatic



asylum ; but he was unwilling to abate a jot of the mission which his angel had confided to him for the King. Not every one among the ruling class of that day was as sceptical as Decazes. Not much later, in 1830, the final downfall of these elder Bourbons was partly due to measures which the next king, Charles the Tenth, took in consequence of just such visions had by his own Prime Minister de Polignac.

Anobleman who had influence with the King, the Vicomte de La Rochefoucauld, went to Charenton to talk over his visions with Martin. He was so impressed that he came straight to the King and told him what he had heard from this mysterious peasant who talked with an angel about the salvation of France. Louis the Eighteenth has always been supposed to have lived and died a disciple of doubting Voltaire, but he had the curiosity to talk with Martin himself.

The peasant was brought before the King on the 2nd of April in that year 1816. He told calmly and simply the story of the angel that guided him ; and then he delivered the angel's message to the King.

It was not what Louis the Eighteenth had

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been told he would hear. It did not concern Sunday observance and good police alone. In the name of the angel and without fear, the peasant said to His Majesty the King:

‘ You hold a seat which does not belong to you. If you go to Rheims to be consecrated with the Sacred Chrism like the Kings of France before you, the anointing shall strike you dead. Call him to be king who alone is the rightful king ! ’

Louis the Eighteenth, as soon as he could, rid himself of the man who reminded him so bluntly of the popular rumour that there was a Louis the Seventeenth still alive and rightful King of France. Martin went back to his asylum with the calmness of one who has done his duty. He said ever after :

‘ The King wept when he heard what I had to say. ’

The Sacre, against which Martin warned him, was the coronation of the King with religious anointing at the hands of the Archbishop of Rheims as successor of St. Rémi, who anointed Clovis, first King of France. It was put off indefinitely, and Louis the Eighteenth goes down in history as the only King of France who was not thus anointed.

Martin was surer than ever that he had done right in obeying the commands of his angel. Having done his whole duty, he lived on peaceably until the King's death and through his successor's entire reign, although no Louis the Seventeenth ever came to the throne. Charles the Tenth went through the ceremony of the Sacre at Rheims in 1825 and the holy oils did him no harm; and the Revolution of 1830 set a new-fangled 'King of the French'—Louis Philippe, who was past anointing—over the heads of any and every legitimate heir of the Bourbons.

Whether the angel came again to Farmer Martin on these occasions, we know not. But when he died in 1834, on the 8th of May, his death seemed suspicious to many who believed his story; and his heirs wrote a letter which was printed, to show that he had been poisoned—doubtless by those to whom his death should profit.

This suspicion and doubt that Louis the Seventeenth was somewhere still alive, brooded over France all these years. Count Decazes had to count with it in 1816 when he faced the growing scandal concerning Charles de Navarre, the prisoner at Rouen.

## XI

Charles of Navarre was kept prisoner at the Bicêtre of Rouen for a year and three months. During all these months at the Bicêtre, he seems never once to have been brought up before a magistrate for examination. He was under arrest—it would have been difficult to explain for what. The police spies among the promiscuous assemblage of prisoners kept an eye on him. For the rest, he was left to mould, shut away from the public whom his presence and talk might disturb.

In all this it is impossible not to recognise the same police methods which had been applied three different times to Hervagault under Napoleon. Under the new régime, with its restored Bourbon King still shaky on his throne, the method worked the wrong way.

In the prison world, during the long idle days in which nothing happened, Charles of Navarre soon had a little Court around him. He spoke with few, but they were such as could understand. When he came up for trial after two full years had passed, the judge asked the reason of his choice of intimates.



‘I thought they too might be kept in prison for State reasons—I knew there wasn’t much justice in France.’

*Père* (Father) Larcher had been a Trappist monk before the Revolution. The changes and chances of the irregular life which followed had brought him in his old age to prison, on what charge we do not know. For old time’s sake, he took up with ardour the cause of the Dauphin lost and found. His knowledge of all that had been happening made him a good counsellor of Charles of Navarre, who knew only what he had heard among ignorant people with whatever else he might remember from his boyhood.

Tourly, a Rouen *huissier* (sheriff’s officer or bailiff) who was serving his second year in prison for falsification of private papers which he had to certify, was Larcher’s closest friend in the prison. He explained this friendship to the judge at the trial of Charles of Navarre. ‘He had some education and I am not without it—that was the only reason of our intimacy.’ Tourly became the secretary of Charles of Navarre and Larcher.

Among the prisoners there was a third efficient man for what we would now call the

publicity bureau of a Royal Pretender shut up in gaol. It was Branzon, who had been a city exciseman and was in prison for malfeasance in office.

Practically only their keeper Libois stood between the prisoners and the outside world. He was easy-going, subject to little supervision, and quite willing for money or persuasion to allow visits and to forward correspondence. He fell in with the little Court of his distinguished new prisoner; and a propaganda in favour of Charles of Navarre as Louis the Seventeenth began before Minister of Police Decazes knew what was going on.

Tourly had a visit from an old friend, Madame Bourlienne, who was a sort of commercial traveller in cotton goods. He told her the story of 'Monsieur Charles,' as they called him in the prison. This was by way of compromise between Charles of Navarre, which he called himself, and Charles Phelippeau, which was the name insisted on by the police. She was greatly interested and, on her next trip to Paris, talked to a Madame Brunel who at once came on to Rouen to see for herself.

Madame Brunel went back with three letters written out by Tourly in the name of Charles

of Navarre—one to his ‘uncle,’ King Louis the Eighteenth; one to his ‘sister,’ the daughter of Louis the Sixteenth, who was in the Temple prison when the Dauphin was supposed to have died, and was now married and at Court as the Duchess of Angoulême; and one to the Comte de Damas, the younger Damas-Crux who had been one of the six gentlemen of honour attached to the person of the Dauphin before the Revolution, and was now of the chamber of the Duke of Angoulême. These letters, according to the invariable practice of the prisoner, were not signed by him.

Madame Brunel succeeded in giving the letter to the Duchess of Angoulême (or ‘Madame Royale’ as she was called) into her own hands. She also handed his letter to the King as he went with his Court to mass—the occasion which subjects commonly used for presenting their petitions. The letter to the King probably went the way of most such petitions, but that to the Duchess of Angoulême had consequences which Madame J. de Saint-Léger has revealed to us. It was written on the 3rd of March 1816 and delivered a week later.

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Various women, mostly tradeswomen of Paris, began going back and forth to the prison at Rouen. In May two ladies of higher quality presented themselves to the Abbé Matouillet at the Cathedral of Rouen and asked to be taken to the mysterious prisoner of the Bicêtre. During his priestly visits to the prison, the Abbé had already been in communication with Charles of Navarre. The prison-keeper made no difficulties and the two ladies talked with the prisoner for some time.

Toward the end of July, Charles of Navarre showed Tourly a letter which he said the Abbé Matouillet had passed to him.

‘It is from a person of the highest rank ; and it is written so that only she and myself can understand its real meaning.’

This letter the police somehow got into their possession, although it has disappeared from the police documents in the case. In the secret examinations of Tourly and the Abbé Matouillet, it was mentioned only by its first and last words. It certainly impressed Minister of Police Decazes, for, on the 15th of September, he had Police Commissary Loiseau of Rouen go into the whole affair thoroughly at the Bicêtre itself.



Tourly pretended that the women coming back and forth from Paris were moved by simple curiosity; that Charles had never explained to him the meaning of the mysterious letter, but that it might very well have been brought by one of the ladies who came with the Abbé in a carriage to see Charles; that an unfinished life of Charles which the police had seized had been dictated to him (Tourly) by Charles himself, partly from the printed pamphlet on the *Cemetery of the Madeleine* (where Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette were buried—now the Chapelle Expiatoire); and that a first copy of a proclamation to the French people in the name of Charles, which had also been seized, had been given by him to the prison-keeper—and, moreover, it was Père Larcher who drew it up. He added:

‘I learned this morning that Larcher died last night in the *cachot* (punishment cell) where they had shut him up.’

The Abbé Matouillet pretended to have little remembrance of so uninteresting a matter. He had never seen the two ladies before. One of them who knew the Court had said to him, after she talked with Charles,

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that he was not *distingué* when he spoke of his family ; he was not at all like a Bourbon. For it would be an insult to what we know of such an august family to suspect it of shutting away a person just because he might belong to it. As for himself, he did not remember giving any letter to Monsieur Charles.

The Abbé, for reasons unknown, left at once for Paris, nominally to occupy a post under the King's Grand Almoner. The prisoner of the Bicêtre was ordered under stricter discipline—and the dying out of the affair was left once more to Silence and to Time. Both disappointed the expectations of Louis the Eighteenth's Minister of Police Decazes.

## XII

Secret tidings that Louis the Seventeenth who had been lost was found, passed from mouth to mouth among those fitted to hear. The Prefect at Rouen, who had to free himself of responsibility, reported that it was only among 'credulous people of every class and state of life.'

A Madame Jacquières came on from Lyons to see the prisoner. She belonged to the

‘little church’ of those who wished everything to be as it was before the Revolution. In particular, they refused to accept the changes made by Napoleon and the Pope in the Concordat, which regulated the establishment of religion in this new France.

The Abbé Matouillet had told her as he told others of an ancient prophecy made by St. Cesarius, who was Bishop of Arles twelve hundred years before. The prophecy had been fished out of a Spanish Wonder Book of the sixteenth century, and it had already been published in France in 1814, when Louis the Eighteenth came back the first time. It was thought to foretell the whole course of the French Revolution, and it ended: ‘He that is a prisoner shall recover the Crown of the lilies’—which could only mean the fleur-de-lis that was the royal emblem of the Bourbons of France. Now Louis the Eighteenth was a Bourbon, but he had never been a prisoner.

Prison-keeper Libois was only too willing to serve as gentleman of the chamber to this prisoner with his mysterious pretensions to royalty. One never knew what might happen; and then there were fat pickings, in

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money and in kind, by the way. And he must have been impressed himself to see a strange lady like Madame Jacquières coming a long journey to kneel and kiss his prisoner's hand. When the judge reproached Charles of Navarre for countenancing such a ceremonial, he answered, 'I bade her stand.'

In Rouen itself there were persons of wealth and influence devoted to the prisoner. Vignerot, a retired manufacturer, Madame Morin, wife of the mayor's assistant, Madame Dumont, a linen-draper, and Montier, a banker of Fécamp, were among those who supplied him with money and saw that all his wants were gratified. Madame J. de Saint-Léger has found memoranda of seventeen hundred francs paid out for him, one hundred francs every ten days, from October 1816. There were passed into the prison for him six bowls of strawberries, three live ducks, choice apricots and melons, pears and apples of first quality, a china pipe, and so on. The judge charged him with receiving directly from the hands of Vignerot sixty francs at a time; and the prisoner remarked: 'I have had much more—every one sent me money.'

From Paris, the Comte de La Tour



d'Auvergne came to visit the prisoner and to make arrangements for communicating with him through faithful women of Rouen. The Count's brother was a bishop who had fallen under the displeasure of Louis the Eighteenth. The Bishop much later became a cardinal; but it was not under the restored Bourbons.

At the beginning of March 1817, the Marquis de Messy, who was Prévôt of the department of the Seine and in command of the gendarmes of Paris, brought to Minister of Police Decazes a letter written by Maître Poirel, a lawyer of Rouen. It gave wonderful particulars of the 'singular being' who was shut up in the Bicêtre. These particulars the lawyer pretended to have verified himself.

He speaks English, Spanish, Italian, German, and Russian, and French badly, 'until he is a little excited, when he is not the same man.' He claims it was of him Bonaparte said: 'If I wished to baffle the ambition of certain people, I would make a man appear whose existence would astound the world.'

The letter went on to recount how many unknown things the prisoner had told about persons connected with the Bourbons. A Monsieur de Beauséjour had declared them

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true in his own case. 'It was long believed he was Hervagault—but that he gave to understand was an artifice to prevent untimely recognition.' He had found safety in travel, and had been in the United States and Brazil. And these disquieting particulars, with others like them, were confirmed by a Monsieur de Foulques, who had dined three times with the prisoner.

Such talk was already going through France; and it now began at the Court. It was doubted whether the policy followed by Minister of Police Decazes would be able to prevent a popular outburst, which was the last thing desired by Louis the Eighteenth.

On the 31st of March, Decazes wrote with some impatience to the Prefect at Rouen about his prisoner 'named Phelippeau': 'You must judge, Monsieur, that it is time to put a stop to such an intrigue.' And he reminded him sharply that it was spreading far beyond Rouen.

The Prefect, in the slow way of those days, did not answer until the 25th of April; but then he answered in a hurry. On that day, copies of a proclamation to the people, printed large, had been placarded in Rouen.

It began—‘God, France and the King.’ It went on to inform the French people that their ‘legitimate King Louis XVII., Charles de Bourbon,’ was shut up in the Bicêtre prison at Rouen. To the people and to the *braves militaires* it promised another *grand* Henry the Fourth; and it ended, *Vive Louis XVII.!*

This came on the heels of something which Minister of Police Decazes must have found infinitely more alarming. For it was in a sphere to which his influence did not extend—perhaps not even with the King on the throne behind him.

Another letter of Charles of Navarre to ‘my sister’ had reached the Duchess of Angoulême. It stirred her sufficiently to make her wish to hear more.

A few days later, the Comte de Montmaur and a man calling himself the Duc de Médini were allowed by keeper Libois to visit his prisoner. They were in reality two officers of the personal guard of ‘Monsieur,’ that is, of Louis the Eighteenth’s next heir, his brother, who was to succeed him as Charles the Tenth. They were sent by the Duchess of Angoulême, the sister of the real Louis the Seventeenth.

## XIII

The strange action taken by the Duchess of Angoulême was carefully kept from the knowledge of the public. We should not know it now if Madame J. de Saint-Léger had not discovered the proofs of it amid the dusty documents in the police archives of Paris and the Court records at Rouen. These were not open to curious investigators at the time.

The *juge d'instruction* Verdière, whose business it was to prepare the case for trial, had to report it later to the Court; and he did so very gingerly.

‘Whether the Comte de Montmaur and a Duke or Marquis de Médini (he was in reality Monsieur de Marguerit, officer of the guards of the heir-apparent of the throne) were sent or not by Madame la Duchesse d’Angoulême, is of little importance!’ And he spoke of it no more, except to observe politely that, ‘if true, it proves only the sensibility and prudence of Madame la Duchesse d’Angoulême, who, without falling into the snare so cleverly set for her, thought she



ought not to neglect to have light thrown on even the most improbable presumption concerning an object of such great interest to her heart.'

But it proves more, namely, that the sister, after all these years since they came in the Temple prison to tell her that her brother was dead, had no certain proof of the fact. What it proves as to whether our Charles of Navarre was or was not that brother must be asked from Madame J. de Saint-Léger, and from those who will criticise and dispute her book; for she has other documents in the case, and they too need to be explained.

Among them there are seven questions written out by Turgy, who served the royal family in the Temple. These were to test the memory of Charles of Navarre as to various things which had happened in their daily life in that prison. They were intercepted in the hands of the Abbé Bonnier by the lawyer Maurice, who posed as the legal adviser of Monsieur Charles, and in reality was in the service of the police. The Abbé was another of those priests who would not accept the Concordat made by the Pope with the new France; and he talked of nothing

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less than abducting Charles of Navarre from his prison at Rouen and proclaiming him the legitimate king—one that would do away with the Revolution and all its works.

All this concerns us only as one more adventure in the astonishingly varied life of the 'singular being' who is our hero. If he was really Louis the Seventeenth, however coarsened and worsened by contact with a lower world, what must have been his sudden hopes after despair lest his day should never come—what affections revived from a distant childhood must have stirred within him! If he were a mere vulgar impostor, what spells of elation and laughter as circumstances seemed to push forward his gambling risk of success!

There is no reason to think, as we shall soon see, that Minister of Police Decazes or Louis the Eighteenth himself could have had their minds made up in the case any better than ourselves. It is in the police reports that one of the officers of the Duchess of Orleans, whose husband, Philippe Egalité, had been guillotined, and whose son was to be King Louis Philippe, said on his way to the Court mass in the Tuileries chapel: 'Nothing is less sure than the death of the Dauphin!'

A little more and the legitimate tenure of the throne by Louis the Eighteenth would become the talk of France. The restoration of the Bourbons was not solid enough to risk anything of the kind. On the 29th of April 1817, the Prefect at Rouen ordered his gendarmes to take at midnight the prisoner 'named Phelippeau, Charles,' from the Bicêtre to the Conciergerie, another prison of Rouen. There he was to be given into the hands of the keeper under triple orders : Keep him *au secret* until further notice ; let none come near him but one specified turnkey ; let none know his presence in the prison, excepting the judicial authorities alone.

The Conciergerie bore a name familiar to Charles of Navarre. He pretended to have been taken to the Conciergerie of Paris by Fouché : it was there Marie Antoinette, the Dauphin's mother, was confined when he was made to testify against her ; and from there she was taken to her death at the guillotine.

The Prefect had tried in vain to evade this new responsibility. Ought not Charles of Navarre to be considered a State prisoner ? and should he not be judged by a *tribunal*

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*d'exception* at Paris itself? and, while all communication between Charles and his partisans should be forbidden so that the affair might not be talked about, would not too much show of severity defeat its own object?

Minister of Police Decazes would listen to nothing. And so stuttering Charles of Navarre, who the police insisted was only the baker's son Phelippeau, and who behaved and talked no better until stirred by excitement, was again put away to mould into oblivion.

### XIV

Inside this new prison, the *juge d'instruction* Verdière was now set upon Charles of Navarre. His task was to prove, by means which could be made public, that the prisoner was certainly Charles Phelippeau—or any one else, provided it was not the lost Dauphin.

The procedure of Continental justice still seems to those bred up to English law to resemble strangely what we associate with the Inquisition. In fact, that notorious tribunal applied the general procedure of all Courts



which inherit directly from the Roman law. They do not proceed by accusing a prisoner to his face, so that he knows what they are after and can answer and fight in the open. They do not consider his trial as a game which must be played fair and square between them and him, so that even the guilty man, if his guilt cannot be proved, must go free. Instead of proceeding by such frank and public accusation, they begin by private inquisition into his person and character and life from his infancy up.

It was the twentieth century before a prisoner in France was allowed to have his lawyer beside him, while this redoubtable *juge d'instruction*—the judge who prepares alone, without any grand jury, the case for the public trial—was questioning and cross-questioning him and getting him to talk off his guard, and taking him in a confession unawares. Verdière, first *juge d'instruction* in the Court of first instance of Rouen, had the prisoner 'named Phelippeau' brought before him on the 21st of May 1817. The only other person present was his sworn clerk, the *greffier* Jean Jacques Thiboutot.

Neither that day nor the next, nor at any

time was the judge able to entrap the prisoner in his story.

‘No, Monsieur, I am not Phelippeau; I am the son of Louis the Sixteenth. I ask to be confronted with my sister.’

He talked freely in answer to the judge’s questions; but he escaped all the pitfalls laid for him. The questions and answers copied from the *greffier’s* notes by Madame J. de Saint-Léger, like those already known from the official reports of the public trial later, are amusing and amazing. Both show an astonishing state of mind. The prisoner had that knowledge of persons and events—and those gaps in his knowledge—which would be expected if his story were true.

But between these private examinations and those which were held in public later, there is a difference in the man himself which is more than an adventure; it is a tragedy, even though grotesque. And the story of what happened from now on works up to it.

In these quiet insidious talks with Judge Verdière, the prisoner explained that he had taken the name of Charles de Navarre on his first arrival in the United States, but he had changed it shortly for that of Auguste

Dufresne. When he came back to France, he took it again and called himself 'Charles de Navarre, American,' so that his French record might not be inquired about. He refused to acknowledge as his the letters written in his name from the prison at Saint-Malo, or the various addresses to the public, and the appeals to known Legitimist personages sent out from the Bicêtre at Rouen. He threw the blame on his partisans, and particularly on the dead ex-monk Larcher. At some of them he laughed.

'I should have been a fool, a lunatic, to write like that while in prison.'

Day after day, according to the ceremonial still used in France, he was invited to sign the *greffier's* notes at these private examinations, after they had been read by him—*ne varietur*. Day after day, he refused to sign anything at all so long as he was in prison. This had also been the practice of Hervagault in his various adventures with police and Courts. By the official reports when the trial came off, this was made to mean that he did not know how to read and write.

The judge was so impressed by what he heard, that he had the Phelippeau family

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brought on to Rouen to identify Charles in his presence—if they could. And they were unable to do it. They declared flatly that it was impossible he should be the Charles Phelippeau they had lost. So the authorities were again all at sea, looking to every quarter for some possible identification of their mysterious prisoner.

### XV

The authorities had indeed more reason for alarm than ever before. Their prisoner had become a public personage. They might shut him up in a secret prison, but it was too late to shut up the mouths of his partisans. And, since the Revolution had demolished the Bastille, it was not safe for any Government in France to keep men in prison without explaining why they did so.

Already a little pamphlet was circulating with the significant title, *The Reasons Why of 1817*. It asked why the mysterious personage, who was in prison since 1815 for pretending to be the son of Louis the Sixteenth, had not yet been judged after two years' time. Why all this delay in a matter



touching the dearest interests of the family of Bourbon—a matter which might light the flames of civil war? Even if the man were crazy or a common impostor, was there not justice for him as for every other man? and why should he be punished before he had been tried or condemned?

It was not easy to answer such questions. The authorities could not well confess that they were unable to prove their prisoner to be any one else than the son of Louis the Sixteenth. Popular logic was sure to take this to be proof positive that he was Louis the Seventeenth indeed. For he must be the son of some one—but whose?

The Prefect at Rouen, and the judge and the police, prodded from Paris by Minister of Police Decazes, bent all their detective energies to find an identity for him. The Prefect, Count Kergariou, took the credit of the discovery which they made—such as it was.

So far the prisoner had been known only by the name of Charles de Navarre, which he gave himself, and of Charles Phelippeau, which the authorities had failed to impose on him. The Prefect asked all those who had come in contact with the prisoner to try to remember

the names he had let drop in chance conversations.

There was a Captain de La Pomelière of the 3rd regiment of the Guard, who had been commissioned by his colonel, as long ago as February of this year 1817, to get from Charles what he really knew about the wars and generals of La Vendée. The Captain was amazed at his knowledge of all that country, of what had happened there, and of the persons mixed up in the events. He had difficulty in reconciling it with the common appearance of the prisoner. In particular, Charles surprised him by giving an exact description of all that happened in the neighbourhood of the château of Angrie; for the Captain was himself acquainted with it and with its owner, Madame de Turpin. At the time, this trail was not followed up.

In July, when the Phelippeau family refused to recognise the prisoner as belonging to themselves, the Prefect questioned them closely. Had not Charles, during his month's stay with them, spoken of acquaintances he might have elsewhere? Some one remembered that Charles, when he went away, spoke of going to Vihiers to see a Madame Delaunay and her

husband. It was a faint hope, but the Prefect sent for them to come to Rouen.

Madame Delaunay recognised the prisoner at once as the man who had appeared at her house in 1815, just after he left widow Phelippeau. She explained that she had taken him to be her long-lost brother, Mathurin Bruneau, but he had denied it.

Meanwhile, Captain de La Pomelière had an opportunity of meeting Madame de Turpin, and he told her of the strange prisoner who pretended to be the lost Dauphin, and knew all about her château of Angrie and the Vendean wars of twenty years before.

‘I shouldn’t wonder if he were the little boy of Vezins who imposed on me at that time,’ she remarked.

Her testimony was not thought worth taking; but the Bruneau woman from Vihiers, near Vezins, was asked if she knew anything about the *petit de Vezins*. With her husband, she told how they had taken him in for a time when Madame de Turpin rid herself of him.

The Prefect jumped to his conclusion. He announced to Minister of Police Decazes that their worriment was over. He had found out to a certainty who the tiresome prisoner was.

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He was Mathurin Bruneau, and Mathurin Bruneau was the *petit de Vezins*—and his sister, Madame Delaunay, *née* Bruneau, would bear witness to it.

This was not exactly what the Bruneau woman had said; but it was at once published far and wide. The pretended Louis the Seventeenth, who was a wooden-shoemaker by birth, was made as ridiculous as possible.

### XVI

The troubles of the Prefect and the Minister were not yet over.

The prisoner was confronted with Madame de Turpin. In the twenty years since they had lived together, the child of twelve had grown to be a man worn with many and strange adventures by sea and land. The lady who held out against the Revolution had grown old.

Charles was not taken by surprise, as the Prefect expected. He acknowledged at once that he was the *petit de Vezins* whom Charette's generals left with Madame de Turpin, and that he had allowed her, during a whole year, to take him for the nephew of



the Baron of that name. He questioned her closely about her two daughters, with whom she brought him up, about her mother, and about the Royalist officer for whom she kept a hiding-place. She reminded him of the good turn he had done her after the fight at La Croix Verte. So each recognised the other.

The old lady went on to say : ‘ If you had listened to me when I warned you to be content with your lot, I should not now have the pain to find you here.’

The prisoner answered shortly : ‘ I am not here to receive advice. Since you are Madame de Turpin, *je vous salue*,’—which was a rather crude form of dismissal.

Madame de Turpin would only say that she thought she remembered the boy had been recognised by a woman named Bruneau, at Vezins, when she sent him thither—a distance of thirty miles from her château. The prisoner admitted willingly that he was Madame de Turpin’s boy of Vezins, and that the Bruneau woman at Vihiers, not Vezins, had cared for him after Madame de Turpin sent him away : but he denied that he had been received there as the Bruneau woman’s brother.

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When the public trial came on, the Bruneau woman and her husband and her sister declared themselves unable to recognise the prisoner as their brother, and they did not say their brother who was lost was the same as the boy of Vezins whom the *garde-chasse* of Madame de Turpin brought to them; and the prisoner continued saying he was the boy, but not the brother.

By that time the heads of the Prefect and the police and the judges may well have been in a whirl, but it is passing strange that no one asked this one conclusive question of the Bruneau family,—for they alone could have answered it.

### XVII

Something had to be done. Too many strange things were happening.

In this month of September 1817, another lost Dauphin suddenly made his appearance in Rouen. The suspicions of the people were so wrought up that every one at once declared this to be a clumsy trick of the police to throw dust in their eyes. The popular indignation was so great that the lawyer who pretended

to have charge of the defence of Charles and who was really a police spy of Decazes, had to use all his influence.

He assured the public that the new Pretender was only a poor fool who had gone crazy from hearing so much about the matter. He took the occasion—as he reported to Minister Decazes—to win the confidence of Charles.

Libois, the prison-keeper who had already played a double part at the Bicêtre, posted himself with him outside the new prison of Charles so that they could be seen from the *buvette* or little room where prisoners who had money could buy strong drink. The new keepers, with their strict orders, allowed Charles every liberty of this sort.

Libois motioned to the lawyer-spy as a friend, and the lawyer waved his handkerchief. Charles, on whom confinement and the drinking-room were telling, was only too glad to take off his sailor's knit cap which the authorities turned to ridicule with the public. Then the lawyer went away to write him a letter of 'consolation.' For his defender was not to see him so long as he was in the hands of the exclusive and all-powerful *juge d'instruction*.

An old officer of the guards at the Temple

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prison, named Voisin, wrote that he had testimony to give about the preparations for the escape of the Dauphin, which he had witnessed himself in 1793. The Prefect of the department of the Oise, where he was living, came with a gendarme to summon him to retract. They ended by sending him out of the way to Marseilles—and he was heard of no more.

The widow of Simon, the Dauphin's keeper, persisted in her story that the Dauphin had been successfully taken from his prison; but no judge asked for her testimony at the hospital of the Incurables, where she kept telling her story until her death.

The Vendean woman, Françoise Desprez, was more dangerous, for she had come on to see Charles of Navarre in Rouen. She too persisted in saying that she herself had taken the Dauphin after his escape to General Charette about the time when Charette's generals brought the *petit de Vezins* to Madame de Turpin. The police threatened her all the more because the new king, Louis the Eighteenth, had rewarded her with a pension for her services to the Royalists in that terrible time. Count Anglès, Prefect of



Police in Paris, by order of Minister Decazes, called her before him ; but his worst threats could not force her to retract, and only extorted from her a promise to be more circumspect for the future. She too was sent out of the way under police supervision.

One of the old guards at the Temple prison, a mason in Paris, named Barelle, was stirred by all the rumours about the prisoner of Rouen. He wrote to the judges that several like himself were still living and should be able to recognise 'Charles,' as they called the Dauphin, or be recognised by him. He mentioned particularly the cook who was attached to the service of Louis the Sixteenth and his family.

The letter was referred to Minister of Police Decazes. He declined to consider it on the ground that it was probably intended to bolster up a demand for money.

The judges took a hint from it, however. The cook of the imprisoned royal family was now keeping an eating- and drinking-house at the Ponts-de-Cé near the city of Angers. This might easily have been on their prisoner's way from his late visits in La Vendée to Saint-Malo. They asked him if he had not been at

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the Ponts-de-Cé at that time. Charles made no difficulty in answering that he had. He was not questioned further about it ; and they did not trouble the *restaurateur* of the Ponts-de-Cé. But the judges found in the coincidence a handy explanation of many things that needed explanation.

The official report of the trial made the ex-royal cook responsible for the pretensions of the prisoner of Rouen to be the lost Dauphin. It was he who had given the idea to the vagabond Bruneau, and he had coached him in the necessary knowledge during the few days passed with him shortly before his arrest at Saint-Malo.

The report did not mention Hervagault. And it did not speak of the difficulty of coaching an ignorant sailor in a few days to tell consistently so long and complicated a story as that of Charles of Navarre.

## XVIII

Nearly five months more passed for Charles in this strict confinement of his new prison, and the public rumour was greater than ever. During all this time *juge d'instruction* Verdière

was engaged in what the French express by the term *cuisiner*—the ‘cooking’ of the prisoner to get him to talk. Witnesses had been sought discreetly from every possible quarter. And after all, the case was not ready to go to Court.

On the 13th of October 1817, Public Prosecutor Fouquet wrote about it from Rouen to Paris to Minister of Justice Pasquier, whose office made him responsible head of all the judges and Courts of France. Government had been insisting that the case should be brought to an end. Now it was plain that, in the actual state of public opinion, only a public trial could put a safe end to it.

The Public Prosecutor wrote doubtfully.

The *juge d'instruction*, indeed, is as full of zeal as ever; but he has still to ‘complete and strengthen’ his proof that Charles of Navarre could not be the legitimate King of France for the simple reason that he was really Bruneau, son of the wooden-shoemaker of Vezins. Such proof is essential. (The whole letter of the Prosecutor implies that it did not yet exist.)

Judge Verdière still has hopes of learning what his zeal makes him desire to know, from a very old and very feeble parish priest;

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but it will be necessary to send an officer of justice to get his testimony. He has already failed with two cousins of the real Bruneau. (He must have failed with the priest also, as we hear no more of him.)

The *juge d'instruction* promises to finish up his work at the case by a last long cross-examination of the prisoner, in which he will 'press him into his last retrenchments. This ought to give the pretended King of France a figure grotesque enough.'

But the Public Prosecutor, on his part, has still a professional scruple about the case. He ventures to call the attention of the Minister of Justice to its three chief points.

Is there no positive proof to be had that the Dauphin is dead and buried? If that were furnished, no man alive could be the Dauphin.

Is Mathurin Bruneau (the prisoner) the same as Bruneau the son of the wooden-shoemaker of Vezins? If so, he cannot be My Lord the Dauphin. *Voilà le grand mot.* His Excellency the Minister will see for himself from the report sent him what proofs there are of it.

If it is to be decided that the prisoner is Bruneau 'and nothing but Bruneau,' what is



his crime and what is to be the penalty? and shall he go before the Police Court or the Prévôt's Court (to be transported for sedition) or the Criminal Court of the Assizes? And how are evil brains to be cured and good souls satisfied—and how is talk to be stopped?

The Public Prosecutor wound up by assuring the Minister that Bruneau was quite capable of maintaining his pretensions at the public trial, as he had been doing tenaciously from the start. Would it not be well to take his 'incomprehensible opinionativeness' as a proof that he was plainly crazy? If he should be handed over to police care as a fool, would not that make him and his followers ridiculous together—and be the best way out of the affair? (The Assizes was the only jury Court.)

'I have no idea what impression the case might make on judges or jury, if it is brought before them. For myself, I have not and cannot have a formed opinion.'

Minister of Justice Pasquier was not a man to fail in such a quandary. In full Terror, he had danced for the last time in his life. It was at the marriage of Alexis de Tocqueville's father with the grand-daughter of Malesherbes, who was the last independent Minister of

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Louis the Sixteenth and his defender before his Revolutionary judges—and it was only a short time before Malesherbes was himself taken and guillotined. He had seen Robespierre's head fall ; and he was Prefect of Police in Paris for Napoleon when Hervagault was supposed to have died. A doubtful, stuttering Bourbon more or less did not impress him. Indeed, he walked impassive through three revolutions more until his death in 1862, when he was ninety-five years old, under another Napoleon.

He wrote curt directions to his subordinate at Rouen. His letter, as well as that of the Public Prosecutor, we owe to the history-making researches of Madame J. de Saint-Léger.

His opinion was to avoid making any more noise in the case. That can only do more harm than good. So the Public Prosecutor should have the prisoner sent up to the Police Correctional Court. He ended by a hint strong enough for Public Prosecutor and police judges alike to understand :

‘ As the communication of the official papers which establish the fact of the Dauphin's decease would naturally give them an unpleasant

publicity, it is to be desired that the magistrates should be able to do without them.'

Those to whom such publicity would have come unpleasantly could only be King Louis the Eighteenth, scarcely seated on his throne; the Dauphin's sister, always doubting in her mind; and heirs and princes and retainers fearing the least new change after the storms of the past. All are dead ages ago and their line is extinct, and there is no longer any Government to watch over their good name. But the researches of all these years through police and Court and Government archives, which are now thrown wide open, have found no papers, official or otherwise, and no witness to establish this fact of the Dauphin's decease.

The Court at Rouen had but one thing to do. It must prepare a trial that would persuade people their prisoner was only grotesque Mathurin Bruneau. Nearly four months were still needed for this.

## XIX

On the 9th of February in the year 1818, the public trial was begun at last.

Ten persons had been accused in the case

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before the *juge d'instruction*, but only five were to go up for trial. The charge that there had been a conspiracy to change the order of succession to the throne was not to be tried. This avoided the submitting of the case to a jury whose votes might prove uncertain; and so it was sent up to the Police Court as Minister Pasquier had prescribed.

It was to be simply a case of swindling on the part of Mathurin Bruneau; of complicity in his swindling on the part of Tourly and Branzon, whom he met only after his arrival at the Bicêtre of Rouen where they were his fellow-prisoners; and of complicity again on the part of Madame Dumont and the Abbé Matouillet, outside the prison.

This reduced the whole notorious affair of a lost Dauphin at Rouen to the vulgar case of a man 'without fixed domicile or known means of subsistence, and exercising habitually neither trade nor profession,' who, 'by the use of false names and false qualities, had caused to be delivered to him sums of money and furniture and food,' and so had 'cheated other persons out of a part of their fortune.'

The *juge d'instruction* did not see his way to trying those of the accused who had given



money and meat and so on for swindling themselves; and so five of them went scot free. They were Vignerot the manufacturer; Madame Morin, the mayor's assistant's wife; Montier the banker; Foulques, the 'gentleman' who called himself lieutenant-colonel; and Madame Jacquières, who had kneeled to kiss the Pretender's hand. All of these, except Madame Morin, had kept out of the way and escaped arrest; but they came willingly to testify at the trial. Warrants had been also issued for the arrest of two others — a 'proprietor' and an old-maid draper of Rouen. Against these, further proceedings were quashed.

This manner of prosecuting the case meant that Charles of Navarre in 1818—like Hervagault in 1799 by the police court of the Directory and in 1802 by that of Bonaparte—was to be disposed of by the police judges of Louis the Eighteenth, nominally for having received the gifts of persons who believed him to be Louis the Seventeenth. This was trivial enough. The indictment tried to strengthen the case so far as could be done without dignifying it.

Since this 'Mathurin Bruneau' was a

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‘vagabond,’ and since his false names and qualities were ‘those of King of France and son of Louis the Sixteenth, which interest to a certain degree the interior safety of the State,’ the sentence had to put him permanently under the supervision of the *haute police*. This would allow the King’s police to have legal control of the prisoner’s person for the rest of his life, even after he had served fully the term of prison to which he should be condemned on the main charge. No chances were to be taken with Charles of Navarre.

### XX

The secret ‘instruction’ or preparation of a criminal case for trial in France may seem long, but the trial itself is put through in short order. Ten days were enough to dispose of Charles of Navarre after the two years and two months he had lain in prison, waiting for trial.

King and Prosecution had an easy triumph. The partisans of ‘Monsieur Charles’—all those who had trusted that he was the prince of prophecy, Louis the Seventeenth come again to restore the Old France—had a cruel

discomfiture. And triumph and discomfiture had nothing to do with the merits of the case.

Those who had frequented the Bicêtre during the first year of his imprisonment, when visits were easy, could not understand the change which had come over the man in these nine months of stricter confinement at the Conciergerie. He came into Court coarse and negligent in dress and with a cotton night-cap on his head. One might have thought he was posing for Béranger's 'Roi d'Yvetot,' sung by everybody since Napoleon's time :

‘Couronné par Jeanneton  
D'un simple bonnet de coton,  
Dit-on.’

There was a nasty flush over his cheek-bones, his head wagged on his shoulders, his hands, and at times his whole body, trembled. The best good-will could find no traces of a king in him. Every moment he interrupted the proceedings. When his turn came to be questioned by the judge, he answered consistently indeed, but with coarse and abusive jests. A study of the slang and witticisms and historical allusions of the common people of that day might be made from his answers.

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It was evidently the judges' cue to give their prisoner full play. The Presiding Judge reproached him with habitual drunkenness.

'Wouldn't you say all these Messieurs drink nothing but water!' was his easy retort; but it made people think.

There was already a tradition that the Revolutionary Government had encouraged the prison-keeper Simon to debauch the mind and body of the child-Dauphin; and the abominations to which he testified against his mother, Marie Antoinette, during her trial have always been attributed to suggestions from those around him—for no child of his age could have understood their import. No incident in that terrible history has so turned clean minds against the Revolution. All this chimed in with what was going on before the eyes and ears of the public in the Rouen Court. Those who had known Charles of Navarre were convinced that he had been helped to this ruin of soul and body by strong drink during these last months of prison. Some went so far as to say that his food was drugged all through the trial.

The police spy Maurice, whom Charles supposed to be his legal defender, wrote the



Minister how satisfactorily things were going on :

‘I have passed a half-hour with Bruneau. He is gay, and does not seem disposed to appeal from the sentence which the Court will give to-morrow. He has a nervous affection and trembles all the time; it is probably caused by the immoderate use of spirituous liquors. This veritable mannikin is so little to be feared in any way that I am ready to give my head as surety that I could lead him alone and without escort through the whole kingdom with nothing to fear from him.’

The police spies reported a secret meeting of the dismayed partisans of Charles of Navarre. Baron de Chazet, who had come openly to the trial to take notes of all that should be said, was so revolted by what he saw and heard that he put aside pencil and paper in disgust. All who had known the prisoner agreed that a cruel change had been wrought in him.

He had never pretended to education: his life from infancy, whoever he may have been, could have left him neither time nor means to acquire it. Among many leading questions which were clearly intended to make light of

the prisoner's claims, this one had just the opposite effect :

*Judge.*—‘ It was Larcher who wrote the memoirs of your life for you, was it not ? ’

*Prisoner.*—‘ How could so stormy a life be written ? ’

## XXI

In general the prisoner's answers, while keeping with dogged persistency to his story as he had always told it, were those of a man lost to name and fame. Of course the official report, from which the following samples are chosen, was edited for popular edification :

*Judge.*—‘ What is your name ? ’

*Prisoner.*—‘ Louis Charles, Duke of Provence.’

(This seems to be an attempted witticism against Louis the Eighteenth, whose title until the Revolution was *Comte de Provence*; the Dauphin's title was *Duc de Normandie*.)

*Judge.*—‘ What is your age ? ’

*Prisoner.*—‘ I know nothing about it, *sacrédié*. Go to Versailles and you'll find it in the library, or at the Tuileries.’

(The notes of the clerk of the *juge d'instruction*, published by Madame J. de Saint-Léger,

show that the prisoner, under private examination, gave repeatedly the date of birth and the correct age of the Dauphin for several epochs of his own life.)

Here the prisoner sat down.

*Judge.*—‘Don’t sit down yet. I have to talk a long while with you.’

*Prisoner.*—‘So much the worse.’

*Judge.*—‘Where is your dwelling-place?’

*Prisoner.*—‘Faith, I’m homeless—I’m of the light infantry.’

*Judge.*—‘Where were you born?’

*Prisoner.*—‘I believe I was born at Versailles. There were two of us, I believe,—a boy and a girl. The girl was named Victoire.’

(Is this another drunken witticism? Madame Victoire was the Dauphin’s grand-aunt, who fled in the first days of the Revolution. Every one knew his sister was called Marie Thérèse Charlotte; and Charles of Navarre, in his efforts to get into communication with the Duchess of Angoulême from the Bicêtre prison, and afterwards under examination by the *juge d’instruction*, showed at least that he had been coached as far as that.)

*Judge.*—‘What is your trade?’

*Prisoner.*—‘Faith, I’m a *chef* at every

trade—sometimes miller, sometimes carpenter—*I do chefs d'œuvre.*

*Judge.*—‘I warn you to be quiet and keep your head.’

*Prisoner.*—‘My head is solid.’

*Judge.*—‘You ran away from your brother-in-law, dressed like a wretched little beggar.’

*Prisoner.*—‘Not so wretched as that; I was good-looking.’

(‘Universal laughter,’ says the official report, probably to the judge’s satisfaction as much as the prisoner’s.)

*Judge.*—‘At Madame de Turpin’s château, did you eat with the family?’

*Prisoner.*—‘Certainly; like a gentleman and not like a Capuchin.’

*Judge.*—‘You are telling lies—you ate with the servants, you took care of the dogs . . . and you were there for the children to play with.’

*Prisoner.*—‘That is what I am here for—for the public.’

It is worth noting by the way that the prisoner’s bad French is ten times more pronounced in the official report of the public trial than it is in the notes of private examination made by the clerk of the *juge d'instruction*. It seems to be one-third sailors’



talk from the Breton ports, where Charles of Navarre, whoever he was, had been sailing back and forth a great part of his life. Some of the faults which were made most of at the time are Spanish or Portuguese—as ‘Coronel’ for ‘Colonel’—and Charles pretended to have served in South America. Others are grammatical faults which English and Americans easily make; and at Saint-Malo Charles’s examination in English showed that what he said of his residence in the United States was likely.

*Judge.*—‘Look me in the face.’

*Prisoner.*—‘I take pleasure in looking at the public.’

(‘Universal laughter,’ says the official report.)

*Judge.*—‘Look at me.’

*Prisoner.*—‘It’s not good manners to look straight into one’s face.’

*Judge.*—‘Are you really the son of a wooden-shoemaker?’

*Prisoner.*—‘There are *bougrement* many of them—Carnot might have been one, for he had a lime-kiln.’

(The ‘swear-word’ is still plain; the allusion may have had point at the time.)

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*Judge.*—‘Answer me—it is for your own interest.’

*Prisoner.*—‘I’ve been at sea—I can use a speaking-trumpet if you want me to.’

The Presiding Judge had not always the best of it. Like most officials of the time, he had a Revolutionary record behind him from his beginnings in the clergy to later business and pleasure in the dance. More than once the laughter of the people of Rouen was turned against their magistrate. Early in his examination, the prisoner informed him: ‘If you were in a pulpit, you’d preach better!’

*Judge.*—‘What did you do in Philadelphia?’

*Prisoner.*—‘I worked at thirty-six trades, just as you have done. You’ve been a book-seller and a consul and a linen-draper.’

*Judge.*—‘When you left New York, where did you go?’

*Prisoner.*—‘To Boston and Madeira—the trader in human flesh who has my pistols ought to know that.’

*Judge.*—‘Didn’t you have two hundred negroes of your own?’

*Prisoner* (with a coarse oath).—‘I had no

negroes. My sister may have had. I was the negro myself.'

(This charge of engaging in the slave trade comes back curiously at the uttermost end of his adventures.)

*Judge.*—'Didn't you have crape on your hat in France?'

*Prisoner.*—'Yes; for a lost wife I hadn't married.'

*Judge.*—'But you have two children?'

*Prisoner.*—'If I have one, he's in North America—and he's legitimate.'

Here we have echoes of prison talk reported by the police spies. That a judge should think them consistent with the dignity of a public trial can be explained in only one way—they were to strip the prisoner before the public of any dignity of his own.

Presiding Judge Isabel held bravely to his policy of drawing out the prisoner so that he might make himself ridiculous before the public. His own self-love must have suffered, for the laughter as often as not continued turning against the judge. The prisoner had been too well posted on the judge's variegated career. Before the nine sessions of the trial were over, he seized more than

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one occasion to allude to the judge as a dancer.

*Judge.*—‘Did not the woman Delaunay recognise you as her brother?’

*Prisoner.*—‘Yes, just as so many others have done.’

*Judge.*—‘Did you not pay her?’

*Prisoner.*—‘They wouldn’t let me—but I remember you taught the Delaunay woman to dance.’

The prisoner brought up again and again the judge’s early life in the Church. ‘I had a friend in Philadelphia: his name was Thomas. He was once a monk in your convent.’ And almost his last word in the trial was to assure the Presiding Judge of something which we can only translate decorously by—He didn’t care the Duke of Wellington’s ‘tuppenny damn’ for ‘a judge who had been a bishop.’

## XXII

The judge swallowed all to accomplish his task to the end. Count Kergariou, the Prefect of Rouen, was not so sure of the work they were doing. He reported doubtful progress to Minister of Police Decazes in a



letter found by Madame J. de Saint-Léger in the National Archives.

For the witnesses, the Prefect notes that the testimony essential to the case—namely, that the prisoner was certainly Mathurin Bruneau, and therefore certainly not Louis the Seventeenth—was still doubtful. ‘The depositions of the two sisters of Bruneau and of the man Delaunay have not been as affirmative as is to be desired.’

On the other hand, the examination in Court of those who had frequented Charles of Navarre in his prison was unsatisfactory for another reason. ‘The testimony of Madame Jacquières, the close friend of the Abbé Matouillet and of the Baron de Foulques, proves their complete *illuminiisme* in favour of the impostor—and these persons should be kept under careful supervision.

‘Although the depositions more than suffice to convict him of imposture, it is none the less true that the veil will not be entirely lifted for all the sectarian or factious believers.

‘Mathurin is neither stupid nor mad. He is only rough and coarse, and he is not wanting in a certain deliberate cunning and mischief (*malice*).’

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In any event, the prisoner had become impossible as a Pretender. Government and police and Courts thus attained their ends.

Those who had known Charles of Navarre as he was in his first prison at the Bicêtre, had been able to believe and hope in him. But they could now only sink back into silence. Their suspicions have added one more to the dark mysterious legends of French history. As Louis Charles, the child-Dauphin, had been debauched by his Revolutionary keepers, so for them the grown Charles of Navarre had been drugged into imbecility in his prison at Rouen.

‘Drug’ had a better sound than ‘drink’ and, whoever he was, the process must have been intermittent all through what he himself called ‘so stormy a life.’

To the end, Government took no chances. The lawyers for the defence were forced to give their word of honour beforehand that they would not mention at the trial the story of the escape of Louis Charles the Dauphin from the Temple prison. Méjean, the lawyer of Madame Dumont, was stopped short by the Presiding Judge when he tried to weave it into a passing excuse for his client’s taking up with the prisoner. The Government’s secret

agent reported to the Minister that he had reprimanded Méjean in private, and rendered him responsible for any public opinion that 'the judges had instructions from Government to condemn the prisoner.'

On the 19th of February 1818, the Court sentenced 'Mathurin Bruneau,' born at Vezins on the 10th of May 1784, 'to pay three thousand francs fine to Government; to be confined in prison for five years on the charges brought against him—and for two years more on account of his conduct during trial, and his outrages to the Court.' When the seven years in prison had been served, he was to remain at Government's disposition, and he was further liable to be held in prison until restitution of two-thirds of the expenses. After all this, 'seeing that Bruneau appears to be a deserter,' the War Office shall be notified to take action toward him according to law.

When the prisoner heard the sentence he laughed boisterously: 'They'll get *joliment* paid for their expenses.'

### XXIII

Charles of Navarre was now officially and for evermore Mathurin Bruneau. He was

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seen no more at Rouen. The police reported that he was sent, on the 30th of May 1818, to serve his seven years of prison in the central penitentiary of Gaillon. Here he remained three years; but the prison would seem to have been too near his friends of Rouen to keep him safe.

The police again reported that efforts were being made to enter into correspondence with their still dangerous prisoner. Then it was said he had been transferred in consequence to the isolated prison of Mont Saint-Michel. This was then the use of the ancient abbey, so visited by tourists in our day, on its island rock. The guardian points out the cells of noted political prisoners, and the scenes of desperate escapes to the treacherous quicksands below, lapped clean twice daily by the murderous intrushing tide; but he has no tradition of Mathurin Bruneau.

Louis the Eighteenth died King of France and Navarre in 1824, and his brother, Charles the Tenth, succeeded to the throne. Before two years were gone, it was brought to the attention of the King's Prosecutor that certain individuals—Lavergne, Bourgade, and others—were 'working to give new credit to the fable



of the existence of Louis the Seventeenth, in the person of Mathurin Bruneau.' The Prefect of Police demanded of the prison authorities the precise date of Bruneau's transfer to Mont Saint-Michel—and of his decease.

The answer, dated 30th March 1826, was that he had been taken to that prison on the 25th of May 1821, and had died there on the 26th of April 1822—four years previously!

## XXIV

We might end here the official career of poor Charles of Navarre, but Madame J. de Saint-Léger has unearthed yet another document—a letter from French Guiana, dated 5th August 1844, twenty-two years after the official death. It points to yet another survival. It is reprinted entire in her book from the colonial correspondence of the *Moniteur* or official journal of the French Government.

Louis Philippe was King; the legitimate Bourbons were in exile, and Government had nothing to fear from a sixty-year-old ex-Pre-tender in a far-away convict colony. If true, it is one more adventure of our Charles of Navarre.

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At Cayenne, so the letter said, there is a man whom every one calls Mathurin Bruneau, and he signs his name Symphorien Bruneau. He looks about sixty-five. (The Dauphin would have been a little under, and the real Bruneau a little over sixty, but at that age and after so stormy a life, looks would hardly count.) He has a thoroughly Bourbon face. He arrived in Guiana not long after Mathurin Bruneau's trial, and for a long time he was supported by Government.

He has little education, and his language is as coarse as that of the famous false Dauphin. Like him, he often uses the royal 'We,' and he can make bread and wooden shoes remarkably. When people charge him with being Mathurin Bruneau, he neither acknowledges nor denies it. He is a good sailor, and was several years in the United States.

All this would fit Charles of Navarre. Here is the rest of the story. Remember first how Judge Isabel in Court tried to draw from Charles that, in the years before 1815, he had been engaged in the slave trade from Africa to the United States.

'He has managed to get a boat with a deck, and on this, with the help of a few

negroes, he coasts along Guiana and as far as Brazil.' (Charles of Navarre pretended to have been a *coronel* in Brazil when John VI. of Portugal, who had fled thither to escape from Napoleon, was opening the coast to commerce.)

The letter goes on to say that for some time young negro slaves had been disappearing from Cayenne. At last news came by a French brig from Para in Brazil that Bruneau had been running down there with young negroes not listed in his crew.

The old story now began again. Bruneau was thrown into prison, where 'he passed day and night writing.' The French Consul at Para made an investigation. Then the Public Prosecutor, recognising that the runaway slaves were consenting parties, and that absolutely neither fraud nor violence had been used by Bruneau, sent him before the Police Correctional Court only. He was charged with carrying slaves out of the jurisdiction of the colony.

Nothing more has been found. Who this Bruneau was—what he wrote—whether he died in prison, we know not.

If it had not been for this last echo from

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the trial of Charles of Navarre—and nothing obliges us to listen to it—we might still wander on in the footsteps of lost Dauphins, as we have done already. From the official death in the Temple prison to Charette's army in 1795; from Vezins to Hervagault in 1797 and through prisons to Bruneau in 1805; then back to Hervagault till his official death in 1812, when Bruneau mysteriously re-appears as Charles of Navarre—and now again onward, in this way.

Charles of Navarre was sentenced to prison on the 19th day of February 1818—and what became of him, in or out of prison, is known only from police reports made long after. For even the competent Prefect of Police of King Charles the Tenth had no record of his prison transfers and whereabouts—or of his official death.

Now, on the 12th day of April of that year 1818, the Austrian police arrested near Mantua, in Italy, a youngish man who said his name was Louis Charles de Bourbon. When asked for his papers, he gave a sealed letter addressed 'to His Imperial Majesty only.' Austrian justice shut him up for six years and a half, without other form of trial, in Milan.



Silvio Pellico was his fellow-prisoner, and tells this part of his story in his classic book.

This would be the story of the next lost Dauphin. He is known as the Baron de Richemont, but he called himself Duke of Normandy. He lived until 1855, longer than the Duchess of Angoulême, to whom he was always writing as to his sister. He too had faithful partisans and famous Court trials, from which he came out more happily than Charles of Navarre. Unless—

Well, Frederic Masson is the historian who knows most particulars of Revolutionary lives in Napoleon's day. In his opinion, some one some day will think he has found out that Charles of Navarre is the same as some later lost Dauphin—this Baron de Richemont, for example—just as he was the earlier Hervagault and Bruneau. But that is another story, and it is more difficult to piece together than the authentic adventures now ended. However—

Si cette histoire vous amuse,  
Nous allons la—la—la recommencer !

## LOUIS AND ANNA DE MARSILLY'S HISTORICAL ROMANCE

### I

LOUIS LECZINSKI FOURNET DE MARSILLY was born in 1798 of a family ancient and well-to-do and honourably known in all the country round Poitiers. The seeds of romance were in his blood. Something connected him with the family of King Stanislas of Poland, whose daughter was the unhappy Queen Marie Leczinska, wife of Louis the Fifteenth of France. His mother was a very real heroine of the Revolution, in which the crimes of that French monarch's reign were wiped out in blood.

Her story would be worth writing in all its touching particulars, as has been done for so many others of that time. Here it concerns us only as it shows the stock from which our adventurer was sprung. It is, very briefly, as follows.

Madame de Marsilly's father was a dis-

tinguished barrister of Poitiers, named Laurendeau. He was an old man when the Revolution began; and, when the Terror spread from Paris to the provinces, he was one of the first to be brought before the Revolutionary tribunal.

The new judges were in a hurry to prove their loyalty to the Revolution by imitating the violence of their Paris leaders. They feared the effects of the eloquence of this old man on the people listening to their strange sentences. He had defended the lives and happiness of many of them in his day. The judges refused to allow him to speak in his own defence, and they would not allow any other to speak for him. They tried him with witnesses brought forward by the accusation alone, for the terrible new crime of *incivisme*, that is, refusing to accept the Revolution and conspiring against the new order of things.

The judges were on the point of pronouncing their sentence. They had set up the guillotine in the public place, and it was waiting for its victims. No one doubted that the aged Laurendeau would be condemned to its bloody death for an example.

Suddenly, brushing aside all who opposed

her passage, the prisoner's daughter advanced to the bar. She was young and she was beautiful, if we may believe tradition. In a passion of love and fear, she pleaded for her father's life.

A murmur of revolt ran through the audience. The judges did not dare to condemn the father of such a daughter. Perhaps their own hearts were only half in their bloody task. To the public's applause, they decided that the trial of the aged barrister should be suspended and, meantime, he should be given into his daughter's charge.

This was in the year 1793, and the shadow of the Terror darkened their lives for many months to come. At last violence spent its force. Mademoiselle Laurendeau, when all was over, gave her hand to Fournet de Marsilly, a large landowner of the neighbourhood. Louis was their first child. It is not hard to imagine the troubled heredity and the early training to independent energy and resistance which came to the son of such a mother.

Monsieur de Marsilly was a man of the old school, deeply attached to his respectability. Members of his family had always held positions of importance in their part of the



country. His wife, too, came of generations of lawyers, who constituted a sort of professional nobility—*la noblesse de robe*. He was mayor of his commune; he was president of the agricultural committee of his canton; and his landed estates were valued at 700,000 francs, which was a comfortable fortune for those days. Four children were born to him, beginning with Louis.

From his earliest years the boy excited the uneasiness of all his staid family, excepting perhaps his mother. He was wonderfully strong and intelligent, but his will and fits of temper were beyond control. Every one agreed that his proper place in life would be in the army.

In the year 1812, when he was barely fourteen, Louis de Marsilly was entered at the military school of Saint-Cyr. The discipline and emulation of a great school must have been very helpful to a boy of his difficult kind. It was Napoleon's school for officers; and the spirit of Napoleon's wars, which were still going on, dominated all else among the cadets.

Here young Marsilly remained four years. Then, at the early age of eighteen, he received an honourable post in the Royal Guards.

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This was in 1816, the year after Waterloo, when the Bourbons were restored and King Louis the Eighteenth took the place of Emperor Napoleon.

The restless disposition of the young officer did not allow him to remain contented long in any one place. He was soon transferred to the infantry legion of his native department of La Vienne. He won rapid promotion, and was a captain at twenty-five.

In that year, 1823, he somehow missed being sent off for real fighting in the French expedition to Spain. This was intended by absolute Louis the Eighteenth to strengthen the backbone of the Spanish king, Ferdinand the Seventh, against Constitutional Government, which had been imposed on him. The commander of the expedition was the notorious General de Bourmont. Ten years later he and Louis de Marsilly were to fight against each other in Portugal in the same great struggle of the Continental nations of those days between Absolute Monarchy and Constitutional Government. For the present, Captain de Marsilly threw up his commission and went home to live.

His army record was good. When he was

in trouble many years later, officers who had served with him came forward of their own accord to bear testimony in his favour. Texier, captain in the 13th regiment of the line, had been his comrade for several years, and he said :

‘ We had no officer braver and more loyal than he. I have remained sincerely attached to him. I cannot change my opinion of him.’

## II

Amid the provincial surroundings of his family, Louis de Marsilly was endured and encouraged three whole years. Then they married him off, imagining perhaps it would cure him of his wild schemes. He had already given trouble. The first year of his return, 1824, his creditors obtained a judgment against him in the Courts.

Bride and groom were of the same adventurous temper ; but their marriage could never have taken place without the full consent of their families. In French law then, more even than now, parents controlled their children’s marriages.

The marriage took place at the end of the

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year 1826, when Louis was twenty-eight, and Anna, his bride, was sixteen. She was the only child of a widow of the neighbourhood. She was born to the same social position as her husband. The fact that he was a dozen years her senior and had experience of the great world, must have helped to form her character and still further adapt it to his own. Never were twain of a wedded couple more one than he and she, so long as life left them together.

It was the time when the Romantic movement in literature was taking possession of the minds of the young. Anna de Marsilly had been dreaming in her mother's house of romance and of writing in a book real adventures of her own. No book of romance depicted to her youthful imagination a wilder life than she was to live with her husband, across Europe and into Africa.

In spite of all that happened afterwards, the young wife retained to her death the affection of her husband's mother, who had had her own chance as a heroine.

Louis de Marsilly's devouring activity still ran to schemes for the making of money, but these obliged him to get money from others



beforehand. This was very upsetting to his father, who insisted on following the old, steady ways. Soon Louis and Anna went up to Paris, where limitless fields opened before them. His money-making schemes failed again ; and with them the money which he had cajoled from others was lost.

His creditors set the law to work once more. This time they landed him in the debtors' prison at Clichy, on the 18th of April 1827, less than six months after his marriage. Perhaps they hoped to shame his father into settling the son's debts, which amounted, all told, to less than 5000 francs.

Monsieur Fournet de Marsilly had the old-fashioned sensitiveness to all that might cast a stain on the business honour of his family. Louis had a soldier's ideas of honour, and not the remotest idea of business. The father refused to help his son out of the difficulties into which his lawless self-confidence had brought him, and he never forgave him for compromising the family's good name.

Mischievous relatives reported afterwards, when Louis needed sorely to be defended by his own flesh and blood, that he had taken money by violence from his father. One

brother, and the women of the family with his mother at their head, stood by the young couple.

By the law of the time, Louis de Marsilly's creditors had the power to keep him in prison until he paid the last *sou*. It is true the creditors were themselves obliged meanwhile to pay the very moderate expenses charged up to him by the prison as payment for its very ordinary fare. Their exasperation against him was great ; and he was utterly without resources of his own. It looked as if he might spend the best years of his life in a debtors' prison for sums trivial in themselves. But then, as now, Frenchmen counted closely.

This sort of prison seems very odd to us nowadays. In France, the musician Adam made life 'at Clichy' the subject of a comic opera. In London, the *Pickwick Papers* of Dickens brought out the tragedy darkening all the comedy of life in the Fleet Prison, which corresponded to Clichy. Louis de Marsilly was among the first inmates of the Paris prison, the very year it was established.

For three years and seven months he was kept shut up with others like himself, fretting at this established order of things, reading and

dreaming of a larger day. His faithful Anna could give him little but her own hope and courage. Their day might never have come at all if it had not been for a new Revolution.

### III

Les Trois Glorieuses—the ‘three glorious days’ of the 27th, 28th, and 29th July 1830—were time enough to overturn the throne of Charles the Tenth, the last ‘King of France.’ In his stead Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, who was of the younger line of Bourbons, was made ‘King of the French.’ There was a difference, which was not in the name alone.

Confusion was everywhere, and the new King needed soldiers and officers. The army authorities remembered young Captain de Marsilly, who had quitted honourable service seven years before of his own accord. They looked for him, and found him in the debtors’ prison at Clichy. They soon struck a bargain with him. It was in November 1830, when his debts had kept him in prison three years and seven months.

The application of the law was to be suspended for Louis de Marsilly, and he was at

once let out of prison ; but in law he remained liable to imprisonment for his debts, as he learned to his cost years later. For the present, he was restored to his rank as captain and appointed to a regiment of Paris volunteers. Many of these he himself recruited among his companions of the debtors' prison. His activity in support of the new order was great, and he was soon promoted to be a chief officer of the general staff.

It was a curious time. The new Revolution had been brought about by the middle classes. They wished only for peace and order that they might keep on getting rich. For war and adventure they did not care at all.

Now the volunteers, men and officers alike, were an uneasy element, and they rapidly discredited themselves with the new Government. The people looked on them with hearty distrust. Very soon, for his own sake, the King was forced to rid the country of them as best he might, and for this the neighbours of France lent him a helping hand.

A Spanish Junta of Insurrectos began enlisting all the Paris volunteers who were willing to go down to Bayonne and Perpignan and fight for Don Carlos against Ferdinand



the Seventh in Spain. In the excitement of 1830, the Belgians began their two years' revolt against Holland; and they too were allowed to open recruiting offices in France. Even the crushed Poles lifted up their heads when they heard that soldiers spoiling for a fight were to be had in France; and their committee also made an appeal for 'liberators.'

All this pleased the French people. In particular, they had never forgiven Austria and Russia for marching their armies into Paris against Napoleon. And it solved for canny King Louis Philippe the problem which vexed him—how to free himself from the uncomfortable Revolutionists who had set him on his throne.

At first, Captain de Marsilly was thought to be too valuable a man to be let go with the rest. He was sent back to his native province to organise there the new-fangled National Guard.

This was a kind of citizens' militia, which the politicians of the day wished to have Government use in the place of regular troops. These National Guards became an institution in France; and they were to remain so a long time. In Paris they made possible the next

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Revolution, which upset King Louis Philippe himself. Much later, they helped to that Revolution which failed, which was the worst of all—the Paris Commune of 1871. The Third French Republic has dispensed with their services.

From Poitiers, Captain de Marsilly soon complained to his superiors of two things. His National Guards were good for nothing—and he might as well be doing nothing himself. King and Government agreed with him in both. He next offered himself for any adventurous service they might have in hand, and the King took him at his word.

Captain Louis de Marsilly was detached from army service in France, and sent on a secret mission into Belgium, which was at last on the point of conquering its independence. His new duties belonged rather to international police work than to diplomacy. They suited his temper and removed him from unpleasant neighbourhood with his family.

Anna de Marsilly set out joyfully with her husband on this mysterious mission to other lands. To prepare themselves for it, the two worked together at an elaborate cipher for the secret things they might have to write.

It had more than one key ; and for each key there was more than one section. It was sufficient for the secret diplomacy of an empire.

#### IV

With his usual devouring activity, Louis made as much of his mission as possible. Anna's excitement kept even pace ; and she took endless notes of everything.

She wrote of the character of the Belgians, whose revolt finally triumphed in this year 1832. She analysed in true Romantic style the old general of Napoleon, Belliard, who organised the Belgians' army and died just as they won their independence. He was Louis's military superior ; and Anna wrote of him as a good friend. The Marsillys stayed on in Brussels until King Leopold the First was firmly seated on the new throne ; and Anna took copious notes of his Court.

Anna de Marsilly was now living historical romance and writing it in a secret book. She attached the greatest importance to these writings, and kept them safely through every adventure until her death. Then she left them to the care of her husband ; and he drew

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from them the romantic description of his own and her career, which he mixed up with passionate legal controversies, all about himself, in the book he printed after she was gone. Her notes served for the reports which he had to send to King Louis Philippe. These may some day be unearthed from the archives of the Foreign Office in Paris, to aid historians in seeing the life of those days as it was seen by this strange couple who took so curious a part in it.

There was now peace in the Belgians' country. They too wished to work and get rich. Louis and Anna de Marsilly felt their occupation was gone, and they joined the Liberators of Poland.

All these revolutionary committees promised money as well as rank to the officers they recruited. This solved a pressing problem for impecunious adventurers like the Marsillys. King Louis Philippe had nothing to say so long as they did not appeal to him for money.

Louis and Anna accordingly moved on to Cracow. It was the capital of a few provinces united in a half-independent kingdom—all that was left of the old Poland. This had managed to hold together ever since Napoleon's



wars. But the new French Revolution of 1830 started up these Poles to revolt against their Viceroy, Constantine, who ruled them in the name of his brother, Tzar Alexander of Russia.

By the time the Marsillys arrived in the field, the only shadow of freedom left to the Poles was in the tiny 'neutralised republic' of Cracow. This too was promptly suppressed by troops from Russia, who handed it over to Austria in accordance with the treaties of 1815.

Louis de Marsilly formed his opinions quickly and made them known more speedily still. According to him, there was nothing to be done for these Poles in the teeth of such powerful neighbours. Naturally, he quarrelled with the Liberators on the spot, just as he went on quarrelling with some one for the rest of his life.

Before the year 1832 was over, the Marsillys were back in France. They had gained nothing which they had not spent—nothing but the copious notes taken by Anna of cities and countries through which they passed and of the men they met. She was not tender for the hopes of an independent Poland; and Time has proved her opinion true.

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In 1847, years after she was dead and forgotten, Austria finally suppressed the Cracovian Republic beyond all power of later agitators to revive. But in France the old romantic enthusiasm of the Marsillys lived on. In 1863 another revolt at Cracow failed. In 1867 the monarchs of Europe came to Paris to celebrate the triumphs of the Second Empire, which was to perish so quickly after. Another Tzar Alexander passed through the Paris streets, the honoured guest of Napoleon the Third and Empress Eugénie. The student Floquet, who was in a few years to head a Government of the Third French Republic, jumped before the Russian autocrat and shouted—‘*Monsieur, Vive la Pologne!*’

In the romantic enthusiasm of the Marsillys it was not Republicanism that counted, but Constitutional Government and Liberalism and Free Nationalities—the political novelties of those days. At that very time, Bonaparte princes, like the future Napoleon the Third and his brother, enrolled themselves among secret conspirators and went to fight for the ‘United Italian Provinces’ against the Pope and Austria. For the wild Marsillys, what

counted in politics was the promise of excitement and adventure and fighting.

They were at the beginning of years still remembered, in which later on Frenchmen and Irishmen fought for the Pope while other Frenchmen and Englishmen went to fight on the other side with Garibaldi. Such a restless generation would be as much out of place in the regular armies of to-day with their iron discipline as they were among the orderly civilians of Louis Philippe's France. But they were the genuine children of the Revolution.

On their return, Louis and Anna de Marsilly stayed in Paris just long enough to join their fortunes with yet other Liberators at the extreme other end of Europe. Except their mothers, no one cared to keep so uneasy a couple at home. And so they went forth to wander on the face of the earth unto the end.

## V

This time the Marsillys listened to the call of Portugal. It was twenty years since Napoleon, mighty upsetter of Europe, had

interfered there; and there had never been any settled order since.

In 1826 King John the Sixth died and left two sons behind him—Pedro, the elder, who was modern and a Liberal; and Miguel, the younger, who was for the old absolute order. Since 1822, Pedro had been ruling, with the title of Emperor, over the immense colony of Brazil; and he had prevented its accomplishing another American Revolution. When the crown of Portugal fell to him, he turned it over with a Constitution to his daughter, Maria da Gloria. Dom Miguel, like Don Carlos against his niece, King Ferdinand the Seventh's daughter Isabella, in Spain, protested that a woman had no right to wear the crown; and he proclaimed himself King of Portugal. For four years he kept himself on the throne. Then Dom Pedro came back from Brazil to restore his daughter to her rights as Queen.

In the beginning of 1833, Pedro and a few thousand soldiers were ensconced in the city of Oporto (or Porto, whence port-wine is supposed to come), with a small fleet keeping the harbour open for his provisions. Outside, the troops of Miguel were laying a leisurely



siege to the city. In London and in Paris, 'Pedrist' committees were enlisting soldiers and officers, to whom, as usual, they promised high pay and rank.

Louis de Marsilly accepted the post of major in Dom Pedro's army. With Anna he hurried back to Belgium, where he embarked with a little troop at Ostend on the English ship *Britannia*. They picked up more men at Dover and joined the main expedition at Belle-Ile-en-Mer on the coast of Brittany. The French General Solignac was in command. They at once set sail for Oporto.

It was the month of January 1834. The wintry voyage, with its exposure to cold and lack of comfort, was scarcely worse than the condition of things in the besieged city. An epidemic had broken out. The Miguelists, by process of time, had learned to fire their shells so that some of them fell inside the city. There was no communication with the rest of the world by land; and often the ships bringing provisions were kept by storms beyond the bar. And the money promised to the foreign recruits was not forthcoming.

The little army of adventurers was loud in

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its complaints, and Louis de Marsilly was loudest of all. He must have felt doubly such hardships, for Anna underwent them with him. His outrageous temper, growing worse as time went on, may have been due to this in large measure. But her courage never failed. She trained herself to ride at her husband's side among the troops, and to use cavalry pistols like him.

On the 4th of March a violent attack was made by the besiegers. Without the city walls there were 22,000 men fighting for Dom Miguel; within there were 14,000 defending Dom Pedro. The Miguelists, attacking from two sides at once, were beaten back after losing 1500 soldiers.

For the first time in his life Louis de Marsilly had a chance to show his fighting qualities. He so distinguished himself by his crazy daring that Dom Pedro, on the field of battle, promoted him to the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

The months of that year 1833 dragged heavily on in Oporto until July, when something unexpected happened. More Frenchmen appeared on the field; but they came to help Dom Miguel.

They were the fugitive remnant of the little army of La Vendée which, refusing to abandon the Bourbons and accept the Revolution of 1830, had been fighting against King Louis Philippe. They were led by the same Count Bourmont who headed the expedition into Spain under Louis the Eighteenth, when Louis de Marsilly was left behind and threw up his commission in the French army.

Bourmont was the type of the *émigré* officer. Driven from France by the Revolution, he fought for Portugal against Spain. Then he offered his services to Napoleon's General Junot and rose to be a general himself in the great wars. He deserted Napoleon for Louis the Eighteenth, the representative of his Bourbons, on the field of Waterloo. He fought to restore absolute monarchy to Ferdinand the Seventh in Spain. He turned against Louis Philippe, because he broke the hereditary Bourbon line in France. And now, after fighting for the absolute Don Carlos against Ferdinand's daughter in Spain, he came to help Dom Miguel against the daughter of Dom Pedro and Constitutional Government in Portugal. He kept consistently to the old French tradition—women

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ought not to rule at all and kings should be men ruling absolutely.

Bourmont's soldiers were broken to war, and things looked black for Dom Pedro and the adventurers who had joined him. On the 25th of July Bourmont and his men crossed to the right bank of the Douro and began the attack. The difference between the old Miguelists, dawdling over the siege, and these trained and well-officered French soldiers, was soon shown. At the fourth attack Bourmont and his men got inside the city.

The church bells rang the tocsin. The outskirts of the city were already in flames. The Portuguese soldiers of Dom Pedro fell back toward their master's palace, to make a last stand around him.

Louis and Anna de Marsilly galloped to the palace, crying to the men to turn and follow—that all was not lost. An officer tried to oppose them and Louis rode him down. The soldiers obeyed Marsilly alone. He let loose the inmates of the prisons, and distributed arms to them and to the civilians who crowded into the streets. The sight of the beautiful young Amazon—Anna de Mar-



silly was only twenty-two—put courage into the hearts of the most laggard.

The troop swelled as it went. The young Portuguese General Saldanha, to whom Dom Pedro owed his possession of Oporto, came galloping after with his lancers. They charged the soldiers of Bourmont and checked their advance.

Anna was at her husband's side when the besiegers began falling back. At that moment Louis de Marsilly received a bullet in his breast and fell from his horse. A Miguelist dragoon dashed back with sabre drawn to give him the finishing stroke. Anna was too quick for him, and blew out his brains with a shot from her pistol. It was one of a pair of English make, and she kept them sacredly ever after in memory of her baptism of fire and blood.

## VI

The rout of the Miguelists before Oporto was completed by the arrival of a body of British troops. These were landed in the besieged city in the nick of time, by Dom Pedro's English Admiral Napier.

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The Duke of Terceira, who was fighting for Dom Pedro in the south, also overcame the Miguelist army, and took possession of Lisbon. Soon after, Admiral Napier destroyed Dom Miguel's fleet off Cape St. Vincent. By the time Louis de Marsilly recovered from his wound, Queen Maria da Gloria and Constitutional Government reigned in Portugal.

With strength and energy like that which Louis inherited from his mother, recovery was prompt. Anna, while she tended him, wrote out in cipher her pitiless notes of the rival kings, who were brothers in blood, and of the opposing generals, Solignac and Bourmont, who were brother Frenchmen.

In all this new peace and order, the Marsillys once more found their occupation gone. Perhaps the Portuguese officers were unwilling to overlook their undisciplined call to battle, although it won the day for them when they had themselves given it up for lost. The uneasy, quarrelsome temper of Louis de Marsilly explains the rest.

Sa da Bandeira, one of Dom Pedro's best generals, had been charged with clearing the back country of the last troops of Dom

Miguel. It was an adventurous task. Louis and Anna de Marsilly eagerly seized the opportunity it offered them to escape from their difficult position in Oporto.

Two years later an Englishman of like adventurous stamp, rode on a far different mission through the desolate country into which the Marsillys now plunged with a guerilla band. George Borrow—for it was he—narrates in his *Bible in Spain* his journey through the Portuguese provinces, beyond the Tagus on to Badajoz in Spanish Estremadura. He found everywhere ruin freshly wrought by these partisan wars; and fear and distrust were still rife among the scant population. In this region the Marsillys were to live a few months longer their historical romance.

One of Louis de Marsilly's deeds in this unconventional war shows the lawless character of the man. It was distorted against him beyond all measure when he was tried not a year later for unmilitary deeds in a wild land still further away.

With a squad of his men, he was beating the bush all along the road from Golgau to Santarem, where Dom Miguel had entrenched

himself for a last stand. They came on a cabin in which a muleteer was resting. His two mules may or may not have been in the service of Dom Miguel, but they were a god-send to the French lieutenant-colonel of Dom Pedro. He requisitioned them on the spot with their harness.

The muleteer protested desperately that mules and harness were his own, and guiltless of any act of war. Louis de Marsilly twirled his terrible moustaches—it was a trick of his—and from his six feet three looked down on the trembling peasant.

‘I can’t answer for what my soldiers may do to you if you don’t hand over your mules peaceably!’

It was not the muleteer’s complaint—to whom should he complain in those troubled times?—but the admiring tales of his own men, that brought up such deeds against Louis de Marsilly later.

At the beginning of December the Marsillys found themselves in dangerous plight. In a moment of reckless advance, they had separated themselves from all the main bands of Sa da Bandeira’s scattered army.

They knew that squads of Miguelist troops



were hiding in the neighbourhood ; but they had most to fear from the Spanish Carlists. These were constantly dashing across the frontier when hard pressed by the troops of Queen Cristina, King Ferdinand's widow, who was acting as Regent for her infant daughter Isabella. In Portugal these Carlists naturally held out for Dom Miguel, and their practice was to pursue and plunder for themselves any unprotected Pedrists that came their way.

Nothing was left for Louis de Marsilly to do but cross into Spain, and there, as a Frenchman, demand right of passage back to France. He did not reckon with the panic terror which reigned among the population of the frontier. The little Spanish towns had long been exposed to inroads of Portuguese partisans of all colours, and the inhabitants were yet more afraid of their own Carlists. And they were now stricken with the added terrors of cholera, which had been raging through the country to the south ever since July.

On the 5th of December in that year, 1833, Louis de Marsilly ; Anna, dressed as a man and riding by his side ; one of his Frenchmen, Dehant, with his wife riding behind him on a

pillion ; and another, riding one of the confiscated mules, and leading the other laden with their baggage, reached the ford across the Tagus, on the Portuguese side, by the road from Castello Branco. On the other side of the shallow stream was the poor Spanish village of Herreria.

It was a little after noon. A solitary peasant, with a musket, was keeping watch on the Spanish side. He was so impressed by the appearance of the band that he dashed off and rang the alarm on the church bells. The villagers came rushing out ; the civil guard followed ; and in a few minutes a whole troop, more or less armed, stood waiting to give them a warm welcome in case they should cross over.

Louis de Marsilly was not a man to be easily frightened. If he turned back into Portugal, he was sure to fall into the hands of enemies. This would mean the loss, perhaps of life, surely of his horses and mules and baggage.

Anna was carrying her precious notes in cipher with her ; and the two had had the common sense to sew into the lining of their cavalry boots the bank-notes which they had



THE MARSILLYS CROSS INTO SPAIN.





succeeded in extorting from the impecunious Dom Pedro in payment of their services.

Louis de Marsilly, slinging his carbine behind his back, spurred his horse into the stream.

## VII

The commander of the civil guard halted the suspected new-comer on the bank for a parley. He recognised Marsilly for a Frenchman by his accent, and he asked an explanation of his uniform. If he was an officer of Dom Pedro, why was he not with the others besieging Dom Miguel at Santarem?

Louis de Marsilly had no great difficulty in explaining how they had been cut off from the main body of their troops by roving Miguelists. The Spanish commander, at his urgent request, allowed the four others of the little band, with their horses and mules, to cross the ford; but he ordered his men to hold them at the bank until the *alcalde*, or mayor of the village, should come and decide what was to be done with them.

The Alcalde did what every civil official on the Continent of Europe would do nowadays

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in like circumstances. He asked Louis de Marsilly for his papers.

These were fortunately in order. He had a French passport and a Portuguese passport, certifying that he was a lieutenant-colonel in the service of Dom Pedro. The Alcalde looked curiously at the youthful, slightly-built horseman in neatly-kept uniform at his side. 'My wife, Anna de Marsilly, named in the passport,' said Louis; and he presented the others—his secretary, Dehant, also a Frenchman; his wife's maid, and a servant. Everything seemed regular and aboveboard.

Louis de Marsilly was wise enough at first to ask the least possible of the Alcalde—only to be passed to the next town, and so on to the nearest Spanish army corps, somewhere around Valencia de Alcántara. There he declared he should be able, through the military intendance at Badajoz, to arrange for getting back to France.

The Alcalde agreed to this. He led the band, with the civil guard closing up the rear, to the little village inn, where he left them for the night.

Louis de Marsilly was as usual uneasy. While they were eating, he became appre-

hensive that the Alcalde might change his mind and force him back across the frontier. His uneasiness grew, and finally he asked the guard to take him to the Alcalde's house. •

The Alcalde was informed; but he preferred to come to the inn, where he found the Frenchman had drawn up a paper which he insisted on his signing. It stated explicitly that the little band had capitulated to the Spanish authorities only until arrangements could be made for their being conveyed safely to French territory, with all their property.

The Continental official likes to ask for papers; but if there is one thing more than another which he dislikes, it is to sign a paper that may engage his responsibility. The Alcalde promised his uninvited guest to sign everything he wanted next day—*mañana*. Then he went home to think out as quickly as he could how to rid himself, to his own advantage, of these dangerous invaders of Spain.

All his life long Louis de Marsilly had the idea that he could get what he wanted by arguing and insisting, and talking loud and threatening. Now that he had satisfied this

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idea of his, he went to sleep tranquilly in a bed for the first time after many days of pursuing and being pursued in a wild and hostile country. As usual, he had done the greatest possible damage to his own cause.

### VIII

At midnight the civil guards burst into the room where the Marsillys were sleeping. They first seized their arms, and then informed them they were to be taken at once to the Alcalde's office. There they found that promises made for the morrow—*mañana*—are easily broken.

The Alcalde notified them that he considered their presence in Spain dangerous to the peace of the kingdom and its queens, Cristina and Isabella. Consequently, he proclaimed them prisoners. They were to be sent as such, under guard, to Valencia de Alcántara. And for the trouble they had caused in his poor village of Herreria, he should keep one of their horses and one of their mules. Their other possessions they might take with them.

Surrounded by guards as he was, the Alcalde



quailed before the explosion of Louis de Marsilly's anger. He did not dare to have him handcuffed, as had already been done to Dehant and the servant ; but he had the band accompanied on its way by a guard of fifteen armed men. Then, in his report of the matter to higher authorities, he narrated at length the threats and personal abuse his dignity had undergone during this patriotic police operation.

In the many violent complaints which Louis de Marsilly made of the rigorous measures taken toward him now and afterwards, he always suspects and often openly accuses their authors of one thing. They were either trying to plunder him of his property or to extort money from him. It is not improbable.

A French officer of his rank in the Portuguese army would naturally be thought to have command of means ; and Spanish officials of the time had not too good a reputation for clean hands in their own country. Thirty years of war had left everywhere impoverishment and disorder and uncertainty of the morrow. The Alcalde meted out to his French prisoner the measure which

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Louis de Marsilly had used to the Portuguese muleteer.

Louis and Anna had not been subjected to a personal search. They had their bank-notes in the lining of their great-boots ; their purses and her jewels were intact ; and the sacks in which they had locked all their other earthly possessions, including Anna's precious notes, accompanied them on their weary march.

At Valencia, Louis de Marsilly again did himself as much harm as possible by his loud talk and threats. He might have profited, with a little moderation, by his prestige as a foreign officer ; but his angry and insulting demands on Spanish authorities, civil and military, had for their sole result to start any number of one-sided official reports against him on their way to the central government at Madrid.

He and his party were also dispatched on their way toward the higher authorities, to whom he appealed so glibly. On the 10th of December they arrived at Merida, where the provincial Governor was to occupy himself with their case.

The authorities, so far, had not ratified the decision of the village Alcalde of Herreria.

Lieutenant-Colonel de Marsilly of the Portuguese army was not yet formally a prisoner. At Merida, he and his wife and her maid were quartered on a respectable inhabitant.

This happened to be the widow of the Spanish General Dalcánzar. She at once took to her heart Anna de Marsilly, the girl-wife who had so long been separated from all life and company of other women. And she soon proved herself a true and good friend in need.

The Governor took possession of the two horses and remaining mule, and of everything else except their most personal baggage; and he turned out the 'secretary' Dehant and the domestic to shift for themselves. Then he let things take their course, waiting for instructions from Madrid in answer to all the reports that had been sent up—by the Alcalde of Herreria, by the civil and the military authorities of Valencia de Alcántara, and by himself.

In this movement of official papers, Louis de Marsilly, aided by the literary talent of Anna, took no small part. Within two days, by the 12th of December, he had sent off long letters of protestation to Madrid. He

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observed what the French dignify by the name of 'protocole,' which we are apt to translate irreverently into 'red tape.' Woe to him who does not recognise its necessity in the Continent of Europe! It was quite in accord with Louis de Marsilly's temper and training to observe it to the full.

He wrote to the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs; to the Spanish Minister of War; and to the Ambassador of France at Madrid. To the Ambassador, the Comte de Rayneval, Anna de Marsilly had written from the very first day one of her own romantic letters.

### IX

Count Rayneval received Anna's letter first and he was greatly touched by it. Without thought of consequences, he wrote her on the spot and promised his protection for herself and her husband. When Louis's fiery protest came to hand his mind changed, and the Ambassador retired into his diplomatic shell. That is, he did not answer at all.

It was not easy to do anything. On the part of the Spanish central authorities, everything was suffering from first crude efforts



to live up to Constitutional Government. The Queen's Ministries came in and went out, nobody knew how. George Borrow knew English politics of the day, but he was never able to understand how Spanish governments were made.

At this particular time, the Ministry of Zea Bermudez was running for a fall, and Martinez de la Rosa was waiting for it to get out that he might step in. King Louis Philippe's Government had recognised the child Isabella as Queen of Spain under the Regency of her mother Cristina, and then it let Constitutional Government take its course.

Neither country was likely to pay any more official attention than was absolutely necessary to a troublesome wanderer like Louis de Marsilly. And even he did not dream of appealing to Portugal, which had trouble enough of its own.

Two weeks passed and no word came from Government at Madrid. The Frenchman had received no answer from his Ambassador. The Governor of Merida no longer hesitated to take action by himself. He ordered Lieutenant-Colonel de Marsilly to be placed under arrest and to be treated as a prisoner.

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Louis says that the official who took him off to prison offered privately to get him the passports he needed for a sum of money. He refused, and was ordered *al secreto* to solitary confinement in a cell.

Anna was left with the sympathising Señora Dalcanzar. It was her turn to do the letter-writing. To Ambassador Rayneval she wrote: 'We shall use up our blood and strength in self-defence, in demanding justice. Is the French Government cowardly enough to abandon us?'

She wrote, over the Ambassador's head, to General Sebastiani, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs in King Louis Philippe's Government (she had not learned, in those days of slow communications, that Constitutional Government had dropped him, and the Duke de Broglie had taken his place). She wrote to Dupin *aîné* (the elder brother of Dupin *jeune* whom we have seen defending Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène and Maria Rosa), because he was supposed to be the particular adviser of King Louis Philippe and was President of the Chamber of Deputies which, in Constitutional Government, had to tell the King what to do. She wrote to

Garnier-Pagès, the elder, who was a deputy and leader of the Republican Opposition. And she wrote to the whole Chamber of Deputies or French House of Commons.

More days passed, and the Governor gave orders that Madame de Marsilly should no longer be allowed to enter her husband's prison. She paid fifty francs out of her little store of money and obtained five minutes' conversation with him. She learned that Dehant, the Frenchman who passed for her husband's secretary, had been committed to the city gaol along with common criminals. Then she sat down and wrote again to Ambassador Rayneval.

*‘Monsieur l’Ambassadeur,—I am a woman, and I am barely twenty-three years old. But if I had the honour to represent so great a country as France, I should know how to see justice done to my fellow-citizens; and never would I suffer a superior officer to be robbed and imprisoned without his having given cause for it in any way.*

*‘. . . I acknowledge that I still hope in the Chamber of Deputies. I hope it will appreciate at its proper value the behaviour*

of diplomatic representatives for whom it votes each year dear money appropriations. It will take cognisance of the many wretched Frenchmen who came from Oporto to Lisbon and were left by our Consul to the fury of the two opposing parties, whereas the English Consul demanded and obtained the release of all British subjects who were in like condition.

‘More than once I have shown that I do not fear exploding shells nor cannon-balls. I was at my husband’s side when his breast was pierced by a gunshot. That shall not be the limit of my energy. And I shall prove what history has often shown, that a woman, quite alone and with no help outside herself, can obtain, by her own hand and pen, vengeance for cowardly injustice.’

In this fiery letter we catch echoes of Louis de Marsilly’s big words and—what is more important to history—a glimpse at the troubles of revolutionary adventurers when their work is over. The first idea of Dom Pedro in Portugal and of Louis Philippe in France was the same—to get them out of the country as cheaply and peaceably as possible.

Ambassador Rayneval had by this time



instructions from Paris regarding such uncomfortable fellow-citizens. He was to avoid by all means in his power anything like an 'affair' with the Spanish Government, to which he was accredited.

Anna wound up her letter by demanding a passport for herself, that she might go on to Madrid and oblige the Spanish Government to put an end to what her husband and herself were suffering and indemnify them for it.

Count Rayneval gave no sign that he had received her letter nor that he was paying any attention to her husband's case, which now seemed desperate enough.

## X

Ambassador and Government did not reckon with the women in the case. Señora Dalcanzar helped Anna with her advice and gave her practical aid.

For two hundred francs they bought the passport of a Spanish waiting-maid, and Anna was dressed to act the part. At eleven o'clock at night, without attracting notice, she took her place in the diligence drawn by mules over the long road from Merida to Madrid.

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Her head and face were hidden by the mantilla worn by women of the people. She carried her pistols ready to her hand, and answered in monosyllables any chance questions of her fellow-travellers. They belonged to a polite people and she reached her journey's end unmolested.

The weeks had passed while all this was going on. It was already the 6th of February 1834, when Anna de Marsilly set out from Merida. On the 10th, four days later, she arrived in Madrid and proceeded at once to the French Embassy.

She refused to give her name or explain her business to the secretary who stood between the general public and the Ambassador. Her common dress was at variance with her refined language and imperious manners. It was a time when men and women of the great world cropped up in the most unexpected times and places.

While the secretary was hesitating, Anna rose from her seat and opened rapidly, one after the other, the doors that gave on the ante-room. As she had guessed, one of them led into the private office of the Ambassador himself.

Count Rayneval yielded gracefully to the inevitable. Besides, he was a gentleman; and he could not help being deeply interested in a lady like Anna de Marsilly, no matter how troublesome she promised to become. Slowly but surely, her state of nervous preoccupation and continued excitement was undermining her strength. But her youth and beauty, her romantic career and the intelligence and energy with which she devoted herself to her husband, could not but win respect from those most predisposed against her.

The Ambassador essayed to calm her by kind words. He threw all blame on the dilatory habits of Spain, and he promised to bring the matter at once to the attention of Martinez de la Rosa, who was at the head of the new Government. With natural bitterness, Anna de Marsilly frankly expressed her doubts of any good coming from diplomatic representations of the kind.

At his wit's end and profiting, perhaps, by his past experience, Count Rayneval suggested that she should see Martinez de la Rosa in person. She agreed to this, and the Ambassador promised to obtain an audience for her at the earliest possible moment.

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Señora Dalcanzar had sent Anna de Marsilly to her own sister's house in Madrid; and there she had a few days to recover from her hardships and emotions among warm-hearted friends. The Ambassador did as he had promised. The Minister, Martinez de la Rosa in person, would receive Madame de Marsilly on the 13th of February.

Count Rayneval pleaded illness when she sent to ask him to accredit her by accompanying her to the audience. A person of her stamp, he may have thought, would best attend to her own diplomacy. So she went at the appointed hour, accompanied by the sister-in-law of the Spanish General Dalcanzar. It was enough to place her in her proper rank.

The Minister kept them waiting for a long time. Then, as she told her husband afterwards, he began by addressing her in French with compliments and society talk as if she were a Parisian lady in her *salon*.

She was in too great need to play a part like that; and she may have judged the Minister harshly. He had but lately returned from an exile of ten years in France and England, where he had been obliged to struggle for life as a foreign teacher while



learning the mysteries of Constitutional Government between times. He had been little less of an adventurer than her husband. Perhaps, too, he wished to impress this extraordinary young Frenchwoman by his tone of high society.

Anna de Marsilly soon brought the Minister down to the reality of things. Since he spoke her language by preference, she explained to him in cold, sharp French her side of the case.

Martinez de la Rosa got off his high horse at once and tried to defend the Spanish authorities. He insisted on the reports he had received from Herreria, Valencia de Alcántara, and Merida, all complaining of Lieutenant-Colonel de Marsilly's outrageous insults to the officials with whom he had to do.

This, from what we know of the man, was very likely the truth. But Anna de Marsilly complained of the arbitrary imprisonment of a foreign officer and the plunder of his effects by the complaining officials. The absence of the Ambassador showed the little interest he took in the troubles of his fellow-countryman; and this prejudiced the case against her.

Its essential justice, however, was so plain that the Minister felt himself obliged to

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explain the delay in setting her husband at liberty by the unsettled condition of Spain. He added that he had already three times given orders for his release and for the restoration of their property, so far as it could be recovered. And he promised an official permit for them to quit Spain by the port of Cadiz.

Anna de Marsilly replied gravely that she did not ask for favours, but for justice ; that it was very strange the head of a great Government like that of Spain should be unable to have its orders obeyed ; and that it would be very wrong for him, the responsible Minister, to make promises merely to rid himself of her importunity. Surely, it was not thus he and his brother refugees from Spain had received hospitality in France. And she concluded : ‘If the officials who have done us all this injustice complain that we have insulted them, then we are quite willing to answer before the Courts—or, if they prefer, by the code of honour !’

If the Spanish statesman had had the least sense of humour, this hint of a challenge to a duel from the spirited Frenchwoman would have ended the conversation in a peal of laughter. Unfortunately, he was as matter-

of-fact as herself. He jumped to his feet, bowed low, and left the room. An usher came after a moment to say that the Minister regretted he was unable to continue the audience.

## XI

Anna de Marsilly did not know whether she had done more harm than good by advocating her own cause. She could do nothing more without the Ambassador—and Rayneval, who wished most of all to keep out of trouble with the Spanish Government, refused to see her. Marsilly says he gave the classic excuse of diplomats—that he was suffering from an attack of gout.

The Spanish lady was by this time nearly as much excited about the matter as Anna, whom she had taken to her heart. The two came back so often, their presence in official ante-rooms became so public that, at last, the French Ambassador was obliged to do something. He informed them that he would himself see Marsilly was set at liberty and his property restored, and that an indemnity of 3000 francs should be handed over for his losses and his expenses in leaving Spain.

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Even an indolent, timid Ambassador is a man, and Count Rayneval was struck with compassion at the state of Anna de Marsilly. She was in the flower of her youth; but it was plain that the constant strain on her mind was wearing away her strength of body. He took on himself to get the necessary official papers for her. He soothed her fears by taking her to the Spanish Ministry, where the order for her husband's release was signed before her eyes. He had a seat reserved for her in the diligence leaving for Seville; and he assured her that her husband should rejoin her there.

Anna de Marsilly was quickly ready for this new journey. She had been obliged to give out money on every hand, and her bank-notes lost one-fifth of their value in exchange. She managed, from her scant remaining store, to send what was necessary to her husband in the prison at Merida. For further needs she counted on the 3000 francs which had been promised her by the Ambassador.

The money was brought to her by a secretary on the 19th of February, at the hour of her departure by the diligence for Seville. She looked at it and found only 1000 francs—





ANNA IN THE DILIGENCE.



one-third of what had been promised. It was too late to do anything more. Besides, the embassy secretary frankly informed her it would be useless.

The other passenger in the *coupé* or reserved portion of the diligence, where the Ambassador had secured her a place, was a man who observed curiously the money episode between herself and the secretary.

‘Are you not afraid that highwaymen may rob you, Madame?’ he ventured to ask.

‘In Spain the robbers are not in the highways,’ she answered; ‘and if they are, I can talk with them.’ And she flourished one of her pistols under her fellow-traveller’s nose.

Anna de Marsilly left Madrid with her heart filled with bitterness toward all men in authority. In Seville she had two lonely weeks to nurse her wrongs while waiting for her husband.

## XII

At Merida the Governor duly received the order which Anna had seen signed by the Spanish Minister in Madrid. Accordingly, he had Louis de Marsilly brought out of prison. The Governor first restored to him his private

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papers, which had been seized. Then he gave him a passport for Seville. His faithful Dehant was there ready to accompany him, and Louis looked around for his horses and the baggage which they carried.

The three horses were also there, ready for the journey, with a squad of soldiers to guard the Frenchman who had been set at liberty. The unlucky mules had disappeared, except from injurious official reports which were to follow Louis de Marsilly from consul to Courts for years to come. An ass was led forward on which he was told he must make the journey. His horses had been restored to him; but clearly they were to be used by the Spanish soldiers who were to guard his liberty.

Marsilly was not a patient man, and his patience had just been sorely tried. He had been obliged to pay what he considered exorbitant charges for his own keep in prison, for Dehant—and for his horses, which he was not to be allowed to ride. He refused to mount the ass, and started forward on foot.

The officer of the guard, in his haste to keep up with him, jumped on one of the horses. Dehant took him by the leg and threw him to the ground. This began one of those



mock-heroic scenes which we look for in South American revolutions rather than amid grave Spaniards. It can scarcely have been exaggerated by Marsilly in his account of it.

The soldiers seized their guns, and brought them to bear on the Frenchmen. Louis de Marsilly snatched one of the guns, and held it ready for use, while Dehant stood with doubled fists behind him. The great height and fierce moustaches of this diabolical French officer, towering above them in his frayed, fantastic uniform, was too much for these unpractised soldiers. Besides, Government at Madrid had declared that the Frenchman was no longer a prisoner, and they had no orders to assassinate him now that he was free. The dispute would have ended as it began if the noise of the quarrel had not alarmed the town. The rumour ran quickly through the streets that the Carlists were coming, and a crowd, shouting and panic-stricken, soon gathered.

Like the other weak men who held authority in those days, the Governor of Merida wished to avoid trouble. His most earnest desire was to be rid once and for all of this inconvenient Frenchman. He ordered the horses to be placed at the full disposition of their owner ;

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and he ended by giving back to Lieutenant-Colonel de Marsilly the arms of which he was still deprived—his sabre and brace of pistols.

The man's explosion of rage had made authorities, civil and military, quail before him, just as his fits of anger, as a child, had bent his parents' will.

### XIII

On the 7th of March, Louis de Marsilly arrived in Seville, where he found Anna waiting for him. Their troubles with the Spanish authorities had lasted the entire three months, since they gave up the free guerilla life of Portugal and crossed the inhospitable frontier. They were not left long to enjoy being together again and at liberty.

From every side orders for these mad Marsillys had come to Seville. The Spanish Captain-General promptly notified Louis that he must get on to Cadiz, and leave Spain by the first ship. In vain he remonstrated that no provision was made for his horses and other property. The Captain-General offered to keep them for him.

Louis de Marsilly, like George Borrow a

little later, had experience of the value of horses in Spain; and he had good reason to distrust Spanish officials in such matters. He flatly refused the offer, and appealed to the French Consul for the protection of his property. But the French official had also received his instructions from Madrid, and he could or would do nothing for this fellow-citizen who did nothing but keep every one in hot water.

There was no help for it, and Louis de Marsilly and his wife had to yield, after protesting violently. They were taken to Cadiz, where they were supposed to wait for their ship.

Louis profited by the delay to make one more effort. He appeared before the French Consul, Gros, with his most magnificent air, told over his distinguished military service in France and Portugal, and gave his own side of the story. Naturally, he said nothing of the Ambassador's attitude toward him.

Now Ambassador Rayneval, like the indolent man he was, had only half provided against the energy of a man like Marsilly. He had contented himself with warning the French representative at Seville not to listen

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to any complaints. Consul Gros of Cadiz had heard nothing of what had been going on, and the Marsillys made a good first impression on him, as they did on every one they met all through their adventures. At first glance it was clear that Louis was, in the old use of words, a gentleman bred and an officer of distinction; and Anna was a lady of refinement, whose evident suffering was sure to appeal strongly in their favour.

Consul Gros did his best for them. He found lodgings in Cadiz for Anna and the Dehants, who would care for her; and he advised Louis to return straightway to Madrid—by way of Gibraltar. This was very clever, for Monsieur de Vaubicourt, the French Consul at that important British post, was a man of influence by his family as well as by his office. And Consul Gros of Cadiz gave Louis de Marsilly, captain in the French, and lieutenant-colonel in the Portuguese army, letters warmly recommending him to Consul Vaubicourt at Gibraltar.

Louis de Marsilly thought no more of the ship, on which the Spanish authorities expected him to embark. Before they knew what he was about, he was beyond their



jurisdiction. He reached British soil safely at Gibraltar; and he so kept to his best behaviour that Consul Vaubicourt actually abetted his secret return to Madrid in defiance of Spanish orders. He gave him a passport headed by the diplomatic formula, which made it a safe-conduct: 'Bearer of dispatches for the Ambassador of France at Madrid.'

#### XIV

For nearly a month Count Rayneval had thought himself for ever freed from the Marsillys and all their troubles. Louis he had known only at long range, by interminable letters of complaint and threats. The stubborn insistence of Anna, in spite of the sympathy she excited, had worn on his nerves. He was thrown into little less than a state of panic when, without notice, on the 27th of March, Louis de Marsilly entered his presence.

The Ambassador bent before the storm of words which Marsilly rained down upon him from his great height with violent gestures. He agreed to everything. Then he tried the artifice which he had used with Anna.

Louis de Marsilly, as a Frenchman pro-

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tected by treaty rights, demanded the restitution of his property and indemnity for losses and imprisonment from the Spanish Government. Martinez de la Rosa was head of the Spanish Government and at the same time Minister of Foreign Affairs, to whose department such a demand would have to go for settlement. The French Ambassador could only present Louis de Marsilly as a French citizen to the Minister; and this he would do at once.

What Martinez de la Rosa thought of this shifting on to him of a man who began by laying siege to him in his ante-room, does not appear. Louis de Marsilly was not one to be content with the regulation promise that his demands would be attended to next day—*mañana*. At last, he was informed that the Minister had left Madrid in attendance on the royal family at Aranjuez. He hurried after, and made a scene for the Minister in the palace.

Things went on in this way for nearly a month, and Marsilly became the terror of the embassy. The Ambassador gave the strictest orders that he should not be admitted to his presence. Finally the secretary, La Roche-

foucauld, and the chancellor of the embassy, Ligier, took the matter into their own hands. Their plan could not have been executed without the countenance of Rayneval and positive orders given by Martinez de la Rosa.

On the 20th of April, Louis de Marsilly was seated comfortably at table in the dining-room of his hotel when a Spanish officer, in captain's uniform, tapped him on the shoulder. The Spaniard had orders to put the French officer under arrest and bring him to headquarters, whence he was to be taken without further ado to Bayonne, beyond the frontier.

This was a severe blow for Marsilly. It would separate him from Anna by the whole distance across Spain from the Mediterranean to the Pyrenees. It meant the final loss of his little property and his personal rights as a former French officer serving as a lieutenant-colonel in the Portuguese army. He could not imagine for a moment that King Louis Philippe, once he should be in France, would be more favourable to him than the King's representatives had been in Spain. Without a word, he rose and followed the Spanish captain.

A troop of soldiers at the door into the

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street showed Marsilly what would have happened if he had resisted arrest. He was quick in making up his mind. He complimented the captain on his men, and began speaking carelessly of his own experience of soldiers in various countries.

The Spanish officer seemed greatly relieved, and motioned to his men to fall behind. Probably he had been warned that he might meet with difficulties in executing his orders. Marsilly says that his constrained air was that of a man ashamed of his task. Very likely, for Louis de Marsilly had a commanding way about him, and his military prestige was high; and this would impress an officer of inferior rank, who could know nothing of the reasons for his orders.

The French Embassy was on their way. As they passed the door, Marsilly, with a rapid salute, darted into the house, calling to the captain: 'I have business with my Ambassador.'

## XV

The Spaniard stared helplessly at the door through which his prisoner had disappeared.



If there is one rule of international law observed in all countries, it is the immunity of foreign embassies from military or police intervention. They are extra-territorial: Louis de Marsilly might have been on French soil so far as the orders of the Spanish captain were concerned.

The servants of the embassy knew Marsilly well, and he had made good friends among them. Before the Ambassador heard what was going on, they installed him in a chamber and stood ready to help him underhand in case of siege.

La Rochefoucauld came to examine the situation. He found Marsilly sitting on the bed with his sabre and pistols ready beside him. To questions and threats only one answer was made by this unasked guest:

‘I demand the Ambassador’s written engagement that he will protect me against further molestation from the Spanish Government. Otherwise, I shall use the rights of a French citizen to resist expulsion from French soil. I have arms, and I shall defend my rights.’

Marsilly may have been out in his law, but the Ambassador more than all else dreaded a noisy scandal—and Marsilly was

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the man to make it. La Rochefoucauld proposed starving him out. With the disposition of the embassy servants toward him, it was soon discovered this would not work.

Ambassador Rayneval's position with his own Government was anything but strong, and he could not foresee what might be the end of an international 'Marsilly affair,' if it were once started. On the whole, he thought it best to come to terms. He offered Louis de Marsilly 1250 francs in money; free passage for himself and his wife to French territory; and the necessary Spanish and French passports.

His offer was accepted. Marsilly had won the day against the national authorities of both France and Spain. He made his choice to return to French territory in the new colony of Algiers. This had been in the possession of France only four years. It was still under military control, and attracted adventurers like himself. As he was leaving, La Rochefoucauld brought him open letters accrediting him to any two French consuls he might choose.

It was not in Louis de Marsilly's nature to accept a kindness gracefully. He took the

letters, and, pointing to a mistake in one of them, delivered a parting shot :

‘ There would be no harm in your spelling ill if you would only do your duty better to your fellow-countrymen.’

Wherever he went in these last days in Spain, he contrived to offend the French officials with whom he came in contact. Very soon he was to need sorely that these same officials should at least not say worse than the ascertained truth about him. As it was, the *cause célèbre* from which we have our knowledge of him might never have come to end the life of Anna de Marsilly, and to parade himself as a criminal before the world, if he had not left such enemies behind him. He had beaten France and Spain. It was not going to be so easy to overcome the malignity of men whom he thus heedlessly and arrogantly offended.

## XVI

Louis rejoined Anna de Marsilly in Cadiz. On the way, he managed to recover his baggage ; we hear nothing more of his horses.

From Cadiz, Louis and Anna went on to

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Gibraltar, whence they were to take passage for Algiers. Their money was already running low, and they left the Dehants behind them. This deprived Anna of all care or companionship except that of her husband during the few months she had yet to live. And her last strength was spent in struggles in his behalf.

He tells us how he settled new trouble which he stirred up in Gibraltar. Consul Vaubicourt had doubtless been reprimanded for helping Marsilly to get back to Madrid, and received him coldly. He insisted on withdrawing the Spanish passport for the journey from Madrid to the coast, which Marsilly presented. This was in accordance with regulations, for the passport had served its turn. Marsilly was determined to keep it as a witness to claims which he was going to make on Spain. Vaubicourt then began cancelling words in it which, otherwise, would have allowed of its being used a second time.

Marsilly tells the rest, not perhaps as things really happened, but near enough the truth to show how he made his enemies.

‘I said to the Consul—“If you do not write over this instant every word you have



crossed out, I shall spit in your face and tear off your decoration" (ribbon of the Legion of Honour). Thereupon the Consul took the offensive, and his secretary aided him with all his might. But I gave the two of them a sound dressing, and they had to rewrite the passport as I wished.'

The result of such a proceeding was to be expected. By the same boat which carried the Marsillys to Algiers, the Consul sent a letter to the civil authorities of the port where they were to land. He gave his official warning against 'the person named Louis Fournet, calling himself "de Marsilly," and pretending to be a colonel in the service of Dom Pedro—a dangerous man capable of everything!'

To this the Consul joined the signed statement of a man whom he credited with knowing the antecedents of Louis and Anna de Marsilly. Among other things, it said that Louis had already been sentenced to ten years' hard labour for fraudulent bankruptcy.

The colony of Algiers was not yet fully organised. Civil officials and judges, like the whole European population, were on a level with the Marsillys, so far as law and order go. They took the Consul's warning to heart, and

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resolved to rid themselves of these undesirable new-comers, no matter how.

The Marsillys arrived at the city of Alger on the 8th of June. In accordance with their slender resources, they took a single small room, two floors up, at No. 17 of the little Rue de la Taverne.

The King's Prosecutor, Hautefeuille, had Louis shadowed in all his goings and comings from the first day. On the 16th of June, one week after his arrival at Alger, Louis de Marsilly was arrested by a police-officer in plain clothes as he came out of a shop where he had made a trifling purchase.

### XVII

The police-officer, who had two gendarmes with him, brought Louis de Marsilly to the office of Hautefeuille, a man without the slightest judicial prestige in look or dress or manners.

‘ You, a King’s Prosecutor ? ’ cried Marsilly. ‘ You look more like a Punch and Judy show ! ’

This did not help his cause with a man who had power to keep him at pleasure in prison under preventive arrest, and to

bring the gravest charges against him before the caricature of a Criminal Court, which then existed in Algiers.

Of the three judges, one indeed had some experience as a commissary of police, but another was a grocer by trade, and the third was an interpreter between natives and Europeans. Justice was executed more or less according to the French Criminal Code, as modified by the military government for the needs of the new colony. One charge told against Marsilly. The King's Prosecutor was at the same time the *juge d'instruction*, that is, the examining judge, who by himself alone exercises all the functions of a grand jury, and draws up the entire case for trial. Even in France, nowadays, the *juge d'instruction* is said to be 'omnipotent.'

Prosecutor Hautefeuille was plainly determined to use all the power at his command against Louis de Marsilly. He informed him he was arrested on the charge of passing silver five-franc pieces light of weight. He had just paid for his purchase with one of these pieces, and another was found in his pocket, along with twenty francs and eighty-five centimes of valid money.

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The Prosecutor, with Mourg, his *greffier* or official clerk; Lecocq, the brigadier who executed the arrest; and the two gendarmes, Quinte and Simonet, proceeded at once with their prisoner to the Rue de la Taverne to search his room. The official report of the search, contrary to law, was drawn up afterwards, and not in the prisoner's presence; nor was it presented to him for his signature as being exact, or for his protestation against it; and all this was afterwards acknowledged in Court. And Prosecutor, *greffier*, and brigadier, in the report and in their testimony, contradicted themselves, each other, and such plain material facts as the name of the street in which the house they had searched was situated, and the disposition of the room. Their report declared that more light-weight silver pieces had been found by them in the room of the Marsillys, and a sack of little silver bars, representing, doubtless, the metal taken from the five-franc pieces.

It was easy for Marsilly, without being a lawyer, to sift such evidence at his trial. As our interest is in the persons rather than in the merits of the case, the testimony of the gendarme, Simonet, should be given here.



It so displeased his superiors that they would not allow his colleague, Quinte, to be cited for fear of a like discomfiture. These gendarmes, it may be well to remember, are considered in French law to be always under oath in what they may have to say—*témoins assermentés*—in virtue of their oath of office, and so they are not sworn especially.

## XVIII

*The Presiding Judge.*—‘ Were you present at the search made in the prisoner’s room on the 16th of June, at the time of his arrest ? ’

*Simonet.*—‘ Yes, Monsieur le Président.’

*Judge.*—‘ What do you know of it ? ’

*Simonet.*—‘ I went to the room with the King’s Prosecutor, the *greffier*, the brigadier, and another gendarme. Lecocq (the brigadier) said to me : “ Seize the arms and look sharp ! ” I took the arms and followed the search. They took money, which they emptied out of little sacks ; they counted it on the bed and carried it away with the arms. I was told to take Monsieur to prison. When we were at the foot of the stairs, the King’s Prosecutor left us, saying : “ Keep good hold of that

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rascal!" We wanted to bind him, but he said to us: "I give you my word of honour that I will go to prison quietly, but I will not suffer myself to be bound." I said to Quinte (the other gendarme): "Say, he's unlucky like so many others. They've found nothing against him; we'll all walk along together." We were told he was a colonel, and we offered to let him walk in front, but he said he didn't wish to compromise us.'

*Judge.*—'Did you see well all that was going on in the room?'

*Simonet.*—'Yes, Monsieur le Président. It was very small; three persons more couldn't have turned round in it. It was very easy to see what was going on.'

*Judge.*—'And you did not see the little silver bars?'

*Simonet.*—'No, Monsieur le Président.'

*Judge.*—'Yet you signed a *procès-verbal* (official report) which says the contrary, and was drawn up on the spot.'

*Simonet.*—'No *procès-verbal* was made, Monsieur le Président.'

*Judge.*—'There is your signature to it.'

*Simonet.*—'They often make us sign papers in the office of the King's Prosecutor; we

never look at them. But it is certain that they made no *procès-verbal* at the prisoner's room when we were there.' (The 'Avocat-Général,' or State barrister for the prosecution, admitted that the official report was not drawn up on the spot, nor in the presence of the accused party !)

*The Prisoner at the bar.*—'Does Simonet remember whether any examination of what had been seized was made in my presence? And does he remember what I said to Hautefeuille (the King's Prosecutor)?'

*Simonet.*—'They seized money and arms without saying anything; they left some money for Madame (Anna de Marsilly). Monsieur (Louis) said to the King's Prosecutor: "If you would put what you take on the table, we could make a note of it and see what is done."—The King's Prosecutor answered: "I need none of your lessons—I do as I wish." The *greffier*, the brigadier, and the King's Prosecutor talked together all three by the window; and then we went away.'

*Judge* (addressing the brigadier).—'Lecocq, was Simonet present during the search?' (They had made Simonet sign their report.)

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*Lecocq*.—‘ I don’t just remember.’

*Mourg* (*greffier*).—‘ Perhaps he stood outside the room.’

*Judge*.—‘ Where were you, *Simonet*?’

*Simonet*.—‘ I was with the others.’

*The Prisoner*.—‘ I wish to ask the witness where the sacks were and how many there were.’

*Simonet*.—‘ They were in the *commode* (chest of drawers); there were three or four of them. They emptied the money on the bed and counted it.’

*The Avocat-Général*.—‘ Did they examine the pieces of money? Did they call the prisoner’s attention to the fact that there was something wrong about them?’

*Simonet*.—‘ I saw nothing of the kind.’

As to the silver bars, the *greffier* *Mourg* declared that he alone found them, all in one place, on the marble top of the *commode*. The brigadier *Lecocq* was equally positive that he alone found them in one spot only,—the second drawer. The *procès-verbal* said there were three of these bars, which had been put back in their sack and sealed up. When the sack was opened in Court, four silver bars were found. The prisoner protested that no bars of the kind had been found at all.



*The Presiding Judge.*—‘Where were the silver bars and other fragments found in the prisoner’s room?’

*Simonet.*—‘Monsieur le Président, no silver bars were found in his room!’

## XIX

It was not until three months and a half later, when he finally came up for trial, that Louis de Marsilly was able to bring out all this story of his arrest and the contradictions of the responsible officials who signed the legal report of the search. The English reader will find his protest to the Court both reasonable and moderate.

‘It seems to me that when a man signs an official report, the consequence of which is to send the accused person to prison for life at hard labour, it is his duty to remember whether the facts which he reports are false or true.’

*The Avocat-Général.*—‘You were caught in the act and arrested properly. The mistakes in the *procès-verbal* are of no importance! They do not prevent the bars of silver having been found in your room.’

*Marsilly.*—‘Such principles are contrary to

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all justice. The *procès-verbal* is false from one end to the other. No bars of silver were ever found at my place. The bars were never shown me.'

The passing of a light-weight piece of money was the charge on which he had been arrested. 'The systematic 'sweating of coins' or fabrication of light pieces, with the melting of the silver thus abstracted into bars, was a far graver crime. Louis de Marsilly asserted that he had been two months in prison under arrest before he was accused of this second offence, and before any one spoke to him of the silver bars.

When the case finally came up for trial, the State did not attempt to explain how all this coin-sweating could have been carried out in a small sleeping-room in a single week. No pretence was made that any apparatus or material for abstracting the silver had been found. And the reader knows that the Marsillys had other things to take up their time in Spain.

## XX

During the first weeks after his arrest, the King's Prosecutor left Louis de Marsilly in his

prison without further communication with him. To his prisoner's frantic demands that he should be tried at once, only one answer was made. A *dossier*—papers concerning him—had been received from Spain, and sent to the central authorities in Paris. Nothing could be done until this was heard from.

Anna succeeded in passing to her husband all the information she had been able to obtain. It was written in the secret cipher which they had worked out together in happier days.

Louis learned by this means that Hautefeuille, the King's Prosecutor, was really waiting until the three apothecaries of Alger could terminate successfully the chemical investigation which he had intrusted to them. The prosecution had to explain how Marsilly had been able to execute the crime of which he was accused. After many failures, they found that the action of sulphur would detach a thin layer of silver from the coins; and the King's Prosecutor added to his report that this was the means used by his prisoner to debase and plunder the coin of the French State.

It is not enough to say that Louis de Marsilly lost all patience when he heard this. He called Hautefeuille a scoundrel to his

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face ; and he charged him, on the strength of popular gossip, with all sorts of crimes in the exercise of his office. Hautefeuille retaliated by ordering that his prisoner should be allowed no communication whatever with the outside. Except for a few signals which Anna had contrived, he was left to wear out his soul in continual exasperation.

There were men in Alger willing to befriend Louis de Marsilly—men to whom even a King's Prosecutor had to listen. An assistant judge in one of the Courts was a native of Poitiers, named Vincent. He was acquainted with the good standing of the Marsilly family. He had even been a law-clerk in the office of Louis's uncle.

With Louis himself he could do nothing. Impatience, suspicion of every one, a rankling sense of injustice, and cruel anxiety for Anna, to whose failing health all this new trouble had given the last blow, seemed to have driven him mad. He did nothing but accuse violently those who kept him in prison without means of defence, and he demanded instant trial. This was most imprudent of all, for the judgments of this primitive Criminal Court of Algiers were without appeal. In the present



temper of the Court, there was little doubt that Louis de Marsilly would be condemned to a life sentence at the Bagne.

Perhaps Hautefeuille himself shrank from carrying the petty official vengeance against his prisoner to so bitter an end. His own official days were numbered. News came that, on the 1st of August, King Louis Philippe had named a member of his Parliament, Laurence of the Chamber of Deputies, to be his special commissary for the Courts of Justice in the French possessions of North Africa. On the 10th of August, a second royal decree settled the criminal procedure to be followed in the new Court of Alger.

There was still to be no trial by jury. Four judges were to decide whether the accused party was guilty of the criminal act ; and they were to apply the law of the French Code in their sentences. From these an appeal could be made in due legal form to the supreme ' Cour de Cassation ' in Paris, which might order another trial before some more regular Assizes Court in France. Laurence was to begin his official work by setting the new Court at work in Alger, acting himself as Public Prosecutor.

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All the efforts of the friends of the Marsillys were now directed to this one end—to prevent Louis's trial coming off during these few remaining weeks of the old Court, in which Hautefeuille would still rule ; for its sentence would be beyond remedy. Against all the clamours and foolish, frantic endeavours of Louis de Marsilly, they succeeded.

### XXI

The lofty spirit of Anna de Marsilly had not bent before the storm ; but now she broke in body. She was taken to the public hospital. From her bed she sent words of soothing to her husband, and applied the last energies of her mind to his defence.

Vincent talked over with her the silver bars which formed the turning-point in the case. In the *procès-verbal* of the search, mention was also made of broken bits of silver found apart from the bars ; and it was probably these which had been magnified by officials determined to make out their case, into bars melted from the criminal sweating of the coins. Her explanation was simple, and it is likely.

‘ It was a little packet of fragments which

I had saved myself. I thought I might some day have them melted up for a cup. There was a broken silver crochet, an old silver thimble, pieces of silver ornaments from a rifle, and some old galloon from our uniforms. I thought the packet had been stolen from us in Spain, but it must have been all the time in one of the little sacks.'

During the trial, Louis refused to recognise as his a sack in which Hautefeuille maintained the silver bars had been found and sealed up in his presence. At Louis's urgent demand, the judge sent the sack to the hospital. He cunningly bid the gendarme ask Madame de Marsilly if she also recognised the sack as their own.

*Gendarme* (on his return).—'Madame de Marsilly says her husband is mistaken—this sack never belonged to them. She has one on which there are big English letters. She says: "All our sacks were marked like that"—and she explained to me what the words mean in English. Here is the sack which I took her; and here is the sack which Madame de Marsilly begged me to bring you to compare with it. She wrote the little note in pencil which is pinned to it.'

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*The Presiding Judge.*—‘Prisoner at the bar, where did you get your sacks?’

*The Prisoner.*—‘From a London house, which furnished the money to pay my regiment (his men were convoyed from Ostend by Dover in an English ship). The sacks were all alike; and the one seized in my room was absolutely like the others. What has become of it?’

And Louis de Marsilly took the opportunity to accuse once more the King’s Prosecutor of foisting sack and bars together into evidence falsified against him.

Meanwhile Laurence, the Deputy who was to constitute and inaugurate the new Court, arrived at Alger. The prisoner showed him no more deference than he had done to Hautefeuille. He demanded one thing only—to be tried at once.

He wrote as a soldier to General Voirol, who was in command of the troops at Alger. The General was under the orders of another old soldier, one of Napoleon’s generals, Drouet d’Erlon, who had just been named first Governor-General of Algiers. They agreed with the prisoner that all this delay in rendering justice was intolerable; and they



used their influence to induce the Court to begin the trial.

It was still the old Court, with Hautefeuille as King's Prosecutor. Louis de Marsilly was called up for trial before it on the 10th of September, at what proved to be its last session before going out of existence altogether. The Presiding Judge did not hesitate to express his doubts as to the regularity of Hautefeuille's proceedings in drawing up the case, and he abruptly adjourned trial to the 24th of the month. On that day the prisoner was brought into Court only to see Mourg, the *greffier*, post up a notice: 'The Court, unable to meet, postpones the trial *sine die*!'

Marsilly had a fit of fury. He caught a glimpse of the King's Prosecutor looking down at him from an upper gallery. He denounced him to the public as a falsifier of official documents. He reminded him that the decree establishing the new Court took no cognisance of his existence or proceedings.

'I was the only man to confide in your justice and you deny it me. This is your last blow to my dying wife. You are her assassin!'

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Hautefeuille ordered the gendarmes to take Marsilly back to prison. He arrived there in such a state that the doctor was summoned. He was bled; but the doctor refused any responsibility in his case. So he was taken to the open ward of the hospital, where he found Anna for the first time since his arrest more than two months before.

Disease and excitement had done their work. She was unable to leave her bed; but, with dauntless determination, she insisted on being carried before the Presiding Judge. He spoke to her kindly.

‘Let your husband’s case take its course and go before the new judges. It is better for his own sake. Otherwise he will have no chance to appeal to the Court of Cassation, if it goes against him.’

Louis de Marsilly did not disarm. His strong constitution promptly brought him round and he was taken back to prison. There he wrote letter after letter—to the Governor-General, to Laurence, the new Public Prosecutor, to every one with whom his violence of language could prejudice his case.

Anna de Marsilly, from her bed in the

hospital, spent her remaining strength trying to mend matters. None of the romancers of her youth wrote letters so infinitely pathetic as hers. She gave up what was left of life to soothe her husband's distracted soul and to plead his cause with those who were to try him.

## XXII

In order to put an end to the old Court, Laurence formally inaugurated the new on the 30th of September 1834. No trial was called until the 10th of November, and then only at Louis de Marsilly's persistent demand. His was the first criminal trial in the first regular Court of French Algiers.

There were no proper Court rooms and the trial took place in the open courtyard of the Moorish house which Laurence had taken for his private dwelling. It was the first time judicial solemnity had been seen in the colony. The four judges in their robes were seated on a platform, with the Public Prosecutor in his place. In the upper gallery which overlooks the courtyard of such houses, there were places for the European officers and their wives, and for native dignitaries who were to

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make acquaintance with the European administration of justice.

It was the season of rains, and a sudden shower interrupted the proceedings. The judges retired to shelter, while the *greffier* held a great umbrella over the documents in the case. It was a show, but it was not the Punch and Judy show which Marsilly had thrown up to the face of Hautefeuille.

Louis de Marsilly stood upright in his once brilliant uniform, now worn and frayed. It was soon clear that the sympathy of the public was with him—and that the Court was pre-disposed against him.

The evidence of the gendarme Simonet gave the story of the arrest and the search of the prisoner's room; and the strange official report was sifted. Then four witnesses were called.

Vallée, an apothecary, for two small purchases had received light-weight five-franc pieces from the prisoner. He admitted, when Marsilly demanded that the judge should put the question, that the prisoner paid him seventy francs in an account without his noticing anything wrong in the money.

Dutrian, a hatter, had been paid thirteen



francs by the prisoner. Afterwards, on hearing the story of Vallée, he examined the money in his drawer and found two light-weight pieces which Hautefeuille, the King's Prosecutor, took from him to serve as evidence.

*The Presiding Judge.*—‘ Can you testify that those particular two pieces were given you by the prisoner ? ’

*Dutrian.*—‘ No, Monsieur le Président ; but I had to suppose they were, for they had the same defect as those of Vallée.’

*Judge.*—‘ How do you explain finding only two such pieces, since you say the prisoner paid you three and you gave him two francs change ? ’

*Dutrian.*—‘ Perhaps we had spent one ! ’

The next witness, Este, had sold a franc's worth of opiate to the prisoner and been paid with a five-franc piece. It was at the door of his shop that Marsilly was arrested.

*The Presiding Judge.*—‘ Would you recognise the piece of money if you saw it ? ’

*Este.*—‘ No, Monsieur le Président. It was seized by the police ; they told me it had been sweated.’

All this was clearly insufficient as evidence, the more so as clipped and sweated money

was circulated commonly and openly all along the coast from Morocco to Tunis. This crying abuse may have incited the new Court to make an example in repressing the crime. It was one more piece of ill-luck for the Marsillys.

The prosecution now brought forward a quite new witness, on whom it rested the case.

*Placido* (a Spaniard, giving testimony through an interpreter).—‘On the 16th of June (the day of the arrest), at half-past one in the afternoon, an individual whom I believe to be the prisoner came into my shop. I was busy. He asked me for a Havana cigar. I put a box before him and he chose one. He paid with a five-franc piece. I noticed nothing; but a policeman in plain clothes came in and asked me for the five-franc piece I had received; and he took it, after showing me that it had been altered.’

This witness testified that he identified the particular silver piece for the police: ‘The prisoner gave it to me, face down.’

*The Prisoner*.—‘So this is your important witness! It is impossible you should believe I was making a business of sweating five-franc pieces. According to your own accusation,

I should have had only six *sous* (threepence) of profit on each piece ; and according to your other witnesses, I bought for the money only things of little value, from one to thirteen francs. At that rate I should have had no profit at all ! It is only this last witness of yours that brings a real accusation against me (that of knowingly passing a piece of false money, which was duly identified). I have been five months in prison and you have never once spoken to me of Placido or his cigar, or of the five-franc piece I paid him ! Yet it is the only grave charge you have against me. Can you explain why I was not questioned about it in my examination ? You are lying when you bring up Placido and his cigar against me after this length of time. My foot never crossed his door !’

Two French officers of the garrison came forward to speak in the prisoner’s behalf.

*Captain-Major de Sanzai*, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour.—‘ I have known Monsieur de Marsilly for eighteen years. We were officers in the same regiment. He was always noted for his bravery, for his ability and loyal character. I have been in garrison at his native place ; I know many persons of his

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family; they hold the highest positions in their part of the country and have the consideration due to their fortune and good name.'

*Captain Texier* (his testimony has already been cited at the beginning of this true story, to show Louis de Marsilly's good military record in the French army).—'I have remained sincerely attached to him. I cannot change my opinion of him.'

*The Prisoner*.—'The Consul at Gibraltar (Vaubicourt) has written to the authorities here that I am an escaped prisoner of the Bagne. Only yesterday Monsieur Laurence (acting as Public Prosecutor) sent to the prison to have me stripped and examined to see if I had been branded (convicts in France were still marked in this way, on the shoulder). I would not submit to such an outrage; and because I would have killed the first man to lay hands on me, I was not examined. But I at once sent for the head doctor of the hospital; and, pretending to be ill, I had him examine me with the greatest minuteness in presence of the keeper and others. I demand that the doctor be called as a witness.'



*The Avocat-Général.*—‘It is not necessary. We no longer doubt your identity. The Consul at Gibraltar made a mistake!’

*The Prisoner.*—‘For five months I have been in prison unable to get a trial. Twenty-five days were enough to have all the information needed about me, by writing to my home. Let those who hear me say if this was just; I leave it to their conscience.’

The Presiding Judge here declared that the sitting was suspended for an hour and a half.

*The Prisoner.*—‘The prison is far away. Madame de Marsilly is dying in the hospital close by. I ask to be taken to her meanwhile.’

*The Presiding Judge* (to the gendarmes).—‘Take the prisoner at the bar back to prison.’

*The Prisoner.*—‘Monsieur Laurence promised Madame de Marsilly that I should be taken to see her.’

*The Avocat-Général.*—‘Gendarmes, execute your orders!’

## XXIII

The Court acted all through as if its decision had been taken beforehand. It refused to allow any of the points made by Louis de

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Marsilly against the official report and procedure in his case.

He had shown relative moderation during the trial, with great readiness and acuteness in bringing out the suspicious character of the evidence against him. His patience was now once more at an end. After the summing up of the prosecution he spoke a half hour in his defence, with such violence that he was interrupted thirty-seven times by the Presiding Judge or Public Prosecutor.

The four judges retired to the only room at their disposition, to deliberate. It was a ground-floor room with barred windows giving on the courtyard where they had been holding the trial. Marsilly says in his book that one of those present, curious to know what was going on, climbed up to a window and peered through the bars. He made signs to the others to follow his example; and they had the edification of seeing the first regular judges of the colony, in their official deliberations over their first case, laughing and indulging in horse-play.

Perhaps it was the effect of their strange surroundings. Perhaps they felt no need of deliberating, except for form's sake, in the

case of a prisoner so offensive to them. More likely, they did not wish to discredit in the new colony, so difficult to manage, all previous administration of justice by the King's Prosecutor, Hautefeuille. Likeliest of all, they attached little importance to their decision, knowing that Louis de Marsilly would obtain a new trial in France by the appeal to the Court of Cassation which he was sure to make.

The judges in their flowing robes re-entered the Court room—or rather yard—and mounted their platform. To the astonishment of every one, they sentenced Louis de Marsilly to six years of solitary confinement, after exposition in public, for passing five-franc silver pieces of light weight. They were discreetly silent as to his alleged fabrication of debased pieces of money.

Louis de Marsilly was taken back to his prison, where he signed his appeal to the higher Court. He was still a prisoner at the disposition of the Public Prosecutor; and he was to remain so, pending the decision of the Court of Cassation. No one could foresee how long a time his appeal might drag on.

## XXIV

Anna de Marsilly was slowly wearing out her life at the hospital. She had long since abandoned hope for herself; all her hopes on earth were now transferred to her husband. She wrote to prepare him for the shock of her death, which was near, and to give him heart for the struggle which he was to make in France. Echoes of her Romantic authors are lost in the simple emotion of her words.

‘*Mon ami*’ (‘My friend’—the loyal name of husband and wife for each other in France)—

‘We must *crystallise* the soul against threatening decay. When *Fate* ceases to spin the thread of our existence, nothing in the world can prolong it. Ah! if my existence depended on you, even if it were at the expense of days from your own life, how secure I should be! But, *mon ami*, this is beyond us. I must look solely and singly to one thing—how to die as best I may. If I could remain with you and soothe your pain a little, it would be not only a duty for me, but a great comfort.



‘Let us forget the past. The judges’ decision will be changed in Paris. You will go to France to be tried before a jury, before men of probity, honest men. You must be your own defender—you must promise me this at your first visit, that I may be quiet about it. I despise all the so-called judges and judgments of Alger; the justice of Alger is a permanent crime. But do not be condemned in France.

‘O my own poor country, the most beautiful country in the world! I am a Frenchwoman—how proud I am to be able to say it! I had rather die a Frenchwoman and as I am than live a Spaniard and Queen of Spain. But I am wandering—it is so pleasant to turn away my mind and think of France!’

At the same time, Anna wrote to the Public Prosecutor Laurence, who alone had orders to give where his prisoner was concerned. She begged him, now that her days were counted, to allow her husband to visit her and to be with her at the last.

It is hard to understand why such a prayer at such an hour should have been answered

but grudgingly. The outrageous behaviour of Louis is not sufficient excuse for a magistrate whose judicial temper should raise him above personal pique and anger. Louis de Marsilly, of course, had worse suspicions, and he attributed a new incident, which was very likely due to his own overbearing character, to a deliberate plot of Laurence.

On the 21st of November he was busy writing in the prison ward. Four of his fellow-prisoners, led by a former convict from the Toulon Bagne, set upon him from behind. With his usual alertness and strength of body, he defended himself until the keepers came to his aid; but he had a nasty wound in the head from it. With the usual alertness of his heated spirit, he wrote letter after letter of violent complaint—to the police commissary in whose quarter the prison was situated; to the new *juge d'instruction*; and to Public Prosecutor Laurence. Even the extremity of Anna's need could not appease their resentment against this man who blamed and defied them.

On the 30th of November, Anna found strength to write her husband for the last time.

‘ *Mon cher ami*—

‘ Yesterday I wrote a letter to Monsieur Laurence, as I told you I would do.

‘ You shall come to see me to-morrow, but it will be for the last time. It is all over now—I shall die Tuesday, sometime in the day, at latest. So I shall see you again to-morrow. Oh! I am glad. If they had left me with you to the end, I should have been too happy. If I should no longer be able to speak when you come, we shall understand each other by signs. I have made an addition to what I have already written; I am sending it to you with my letter copies.

‘ You must buy me a crucifix for fifteen *sous*, not more and not less, and put it round my neck with the black ribbon which used to hold your watch. You will have all my things that are here sold by the public auctioneer; only my pistols you will give to Monsieur Moneuse. I desire to be buried with my cap and the linen I have set aside for the purpose. You will do me a great kindness if you place me in the coffin yourself. You will have written on my tomb, underneath a cross, the date and these words:

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‘ ANNA DE MARSILLY, 23 years old

*‘ I am a Frenchwoman ; I have ever been calm amid bombs and cannon-balls. I fear neither the truth nor death. The wretched men who have assassinated me by refusing to do justice to my husband cannot say as much.*

*‘ The Court of Cassation will quash their cowardly sentence—but then I shall be under the ground.*

‘ When you can do so without trouble, you will have my tomb opened, and you will take away with you what remains of me and bury it in France. Every year, on the day of my death, you will have mass said for me, if you can. You will be present at it all alone, unless you go with my mother or with yours, or with your aunts or brother. Here are a few lines for my poor mother ; I have not the strength to speak of her. To-morrow we shall have a little talk about her.

‘ When you get our trunks, you will have my hat with its plume made over for yourself. If the plume is of no use to you, burn it. Never give up my sabre ; you know what a good blade it has. Take care of the sack I



embroidered for you in wool; it holds the chessmen and board.

‘I wish you to take care of my books of devotion; give them to our relatives or to some pious persons. Take good care of our books, our collection of maps, my Italian grammar and my notes; they are all in the blue package, with all I had gathered about Munich and Frankfort, the character of the Poles and the Belgians, and what I had written about brave General Belliard and the Court of Leopold.

‘The lining of my great-boots holds my notes on Dom Miguel, Dom Pedro, Solignac and Bourmont; they are written in our cipher—key No. 1, section B. Sell or burn everything else.

‘Do not forget your own interests. You must pulverise that accursed sentence, and prosecute to the very end Hautefeuille, Lecocq, Mourg, the three chemists and Laurence.

‘The last has done me a service by allowing me to see you; for that alone I would forgive him all the rest, if necessity and reason did not impose on you as the most binding of all duties, to unmask all these wretches.

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Excepting that, I hold no rancour against them. Hatred and anger grow very weak at the approach of death.

‘I should have no anxiety if I left you happy and well rid of your accusers’ calumnies. I shall be beyond the world’s reach—far more peaceable than they.

‘You have a long time to live; see how hard your nails are. Whatever position you hold, always protect the wretched. Adieu! I wish so much to see you now, to kiss you and die. To-morrow—to-morrow—it will be a long good-bye, but not for ever—we shall find each other again. But what a road we shall travel—without each other! Adieu—sleep well. I am very weak, but I shall not die to-night—do not fear. To-morrow!

‘ANNA DE MARSILLY.’

The next day, the 1st of December, Marsilly was allowed to see his dying wife. It was plain that her life was fast ebbing away, and he begged that he might remain with her until she died. This last favour was refused him by Laurence, and the gendarmes who kept guard over him were ordered to take him back to his prison.

It was the moment when the priest came to give the last sacraments to the dying woman. Marsilly refused to obey in a paroxysm of grief. The hospital attendants manifested their sympathy. The senior of the gendarmes spoke up:

‘Colonel, stay—we will take the consequences.’

Anna, with trembling hand, signed to her husband to bend nearer. With her last breath she bade him to obey—for his own sake—and she kissed him a last time.

‘Adieu—somewhere else we shall see each other again!’

He allowed himself to be led away. In the morning they came to tell him that she was dead. His grief turned to rage, and he wrote on the spot to Laurence, who had so much power to help or hurt him:

‘7 o’clock in the morning, 2nd December.

‘*Monsieur*—

‘Madame de Marsilly did not hope to pass the night. She had the greatest desire that I should myself place her body in the coffin which she had prepared for herself. Enemies, on the field of battle, stay the fury

of the combat to give time to bury the dead. May I at least be allowed to fulfil for my poor wife this sad and painful duty!

‘L. DE MARSILLY.’

To this letter of his prisoner the Public Prosecutor made no answer.

## XXV

Religious people say that the worst thing which can happen to a soul is to be left to itself. This was now the fate of Louis de Marsilly. It is only when the shadow of his dead wife crosses his path, that he stirs us to sympathy. But for years to come, amid failure and moral decay, he was the same picturesque, extravagant, socially impossible man.

His constant irritation under prison confinement may be imagined. The keeper tried to take away from him the little board which he had fixed to the wall, and used as a desk for his endless letter-writing. Marsilly struggled so hard for it that the keeper ordered out ten men of the guards to throw him into the punishment cell of the *cachot*. He clung to the bars and wore himself out



with his cries, until the keeper grew frightened and summoned the doctor. The doctor found him in a burning fever, and ordered him to the hospital.

The keeper would not consent to this. So the doctor bled him twice and left him to himself in the dark cell. He tried to get a letter to the Governor-General; but the only result was that the prison-keeper had him searched and deprived of all possible writing material. Worse yet, on the 23rd of December the keeper assigned him a companion in punishment.

It was a native negro of colossal size, who was waiting trial for killing his wife and child and cutting their dead bodies in pieces. The chronicler of the *Causes Célèbres* remarks that this was hardly the same kind of crime as passing a piece or two of light money. But in new, unorganised Algiers human society was as promiscuous as it was arbitrary.

Louis de Marsilly again suspected a plot against his life on the part of the Public Prosecutor. The negro was put into his narrow cell only at night. So he began sleeping only in the daytime. In spite of himself he dozed off, about four o'clock in

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the morning of the 28th December, where he was standing, wrapped in his cloak and leaning against the wall. The negro's hands at his throat waked him to a life-and-death struggle.

He had not lost the muscles of iron which won him reputation in the guerilla wars. Freeing his arms from his cloak, he twined them round the body of the untrained negro, who was biting at him like a wild animal. Lifting the savage off his feet, he beat his body against the wall. When the keeper unlocked the door, the negro had ceased howling and was all but dead under the blows which Marsilly was striking him with the stone that served him for a pillow on the floor. The negro came to life; but no further attempt was made to inflict company on Marsilly in his dungeon.

Rumours of this extraordinary treatment ended by coming to the ears of the old soldier who was Governor-General of the colony. With all his deference for the civilian element which was beginning its rule, he thought the case justified his interference.

The Public Prosecutor treated the prisoner

as a criminal already condemned, with no respect for his appeal to a higher Court than his own. Governor-General Drouet d'Erlon passed over the official head and ordered that Marsilly should be transferred to the hospital. There, Marsilly says, he was allowed a bath and exercise for the first time since his arrest more than six months before.

It was now the 3rd of January 1835. The corvette *Caravane* soon entered port, with an order for the prisoners who were to be taken to France for final trial. The name of Louis de Marsilly was among them.

When the day came for the guards to bring the prisoners to the ship, the officer in charge ordered that Marsilly should be bound. He resisted so fiercely that they gave way, and he marched free to the port. On board, the officer who had charge of the prisoners had received a particular report about him. He gave orders that Marsilly should be kept in irons in the hold; but Naval-Lieutenant Lachaise, who commanded the *Caravane*, interfered, and saw that he was placed in a cabin with two guards at the door.

Storms delayed their departure, and they arrived at Marseilles only on the 24th of

February. There Louis de Marsilly learned that his appeal was successful. The Court of Cassation annulled sentence and proceedings of the tribunals of Alger and sent him for a new trial before the May Assizes at Aix in Provence.

## XXVI

Public Prosecutor Borelli at Aix was inclined on the whole to look on his prisoner as half mad rather than wholly bad. Marsilly was on his good behaviour, but his eccentricities were still not a little trying to the judges and officials of these old-fashioned Courts, where everything was always done the same way.

He was no longer treated as a convict, but as a prisoner waiting trial on appeal. His possessions were restored to him. In sorting out the contents of his travelling bags, he carefully wrapped up his parade arms to prevent their gilding being tarnished; and he had the package taken to the Court clerk at the *greffe* for safe-keeping. He labelled it in large letters :

‘ Arms of Lieutenant-Colonel de Marsilly,



who entered the prison of Aix the 6th March and was acquitted by the jury the 19th May 1835, between eight and ten o'clock in the evening.'

His case had indeed been called for the 18th of May; but his vaunting beforehand that it would go through in a day's time, with the jury in his favour, shocked Judge Olivier, who was to preside. He ordered the prisoner to be brought before him for a reprimand. Louis de Marsilly seized the opportunity to ask that he should have the use of a table during the trial and that his servant might be present to wait on him.

'I promised my wife on her deathbed that I would conduct my defence myself. I have more than three hundred documents to keep in order.'

This dismayed the judge still more. 'I have been a presiding judge twenty-two years and I intend to do the presiding at the coming Assizes. If there are any orders to be given, I shall give them myself. And I tell you now that you shall have no table and you shall sit where prisoners are always seated during trial.'

'Monsieur le Président, I shall write at

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once to the Minister of Justice to obtain what is necessary for my defence.'

To the judge's mortification, Persil, who was Minister of Justice in King Louis Philippe's Government and at the head of the entire Court organisation of France, granted Marsilly's request. A board was to be fastened to the prisoners' dock in front of his seat, so that he might use the documents which he needed for his defence. All this was not likely to increase the confidence of the Court in its own authority.

The session opened on the 18th of May, and Marsilly's case was the first called for trial. He stood tall and upright in his still brilliant uniform, with the eyes of all that was curious and distinguished in Aix observing him.

An army personage of rank, the Intendant Dutrochet, pushed his way through the crowd to the bench of the prisoner, who was putting his boardful of documents in order. When young in their army career, the two had been close comrades. In the sight of every one, Dutrochet grasped the hand of Louis de Marsilly while tears ran down his cheeks.

'Marsilly, how is it possible that I find you here?'

## XXVII

The reading of the indictment made known the official reports of the King's Prosecutor Hautefeuille at Alger, for on these the new trial also had to be based. Three witnesses, Vallée, Dutrian, and Placido, had been brought over to Aix.

It is said by philosophers that the lawyer gradually replaces the soldier in the long progress of civilisation. Louis de Marsilly was like civilisation.

He caught up the judges on legal points of the Code; and he brought out with great clearness the illegality of much of the official action which had been taken against him. He forced the Public Prosecutor, who was lost in the multitude of documents sent him from the Court of Alger, to produce two contradictory official reports concerning a single fact,—one of the most important in the case,—the identification and delivery of the light-weight five-franc pieces of silver to the chemists (apothecaries) of Alger for examination.

The judges audibly expressed their astonishment. The jury sat back in their places with the expression of men who had made up their

minds about the merits of the case. They were henceforth interested only in the personality of the accused party.

The Avocat-Général, Marquezi, did his best in summing-up for the prosecution. He went over the whole story of Louis de Marsilly's life unfavourably. One accustomed to English Courts always has the impression that the Criminal Courts of the Continent try their prisoner for his entire past life quite as much as for the present accusation against him. The Avocat-Général insisted on three facts.

Marsilly, at home, had extorted money by violence from his father, for which reason he had been cast off by his family. Marsilly, in Spain, had been guilty of highway robbery (this was the version, given in the report of the Consul at Gibraltar, of his requisitioning mules in Portugal). And Marsilly must have known the crime he was committing in Alger when he passed off the light silver piece on Placido—for he laid it face down on the counter.

‘Gentlemen of the jury, if good family, fortune, and great abilities have weight with you, then the prisoner at the bar may count in every way on your indulgence. But if one



who, with all these advantages, has turned aside from the way of his fathers and of honour deserves just and severe punishment, then the man before you must expect all your severity. For he has been a bad son—a bad citizen—a bad soldier!’

Louis de Marsilly began his long speech in defence of himself in the present and the past.

‘Gentlemen of the jury, I am accused of a great crime. Instead of discussing coolly the proofs which they pretend to have against me, they go back into my past life to hunt up facts that may stir you to indignation and crush a man who stands up struggling against imprisonment for life at hard labour.

‘I, a bad soldier? I have the right to despise such a charge—I shall not answer it.

‘I, a bad citizen? I have been a French officer for twenty years; and when I was no longer in active service, my country chose to put me at the head of the National Guard.’

Here Marsilly read out his certificates of service in 1830, signed by names many of which are still remembered: his superior officer at Chartres; his colonel, Bory de Saint-Vincent; his general, Pajol; Alexandre de Laborde, prefect of police, for whom Marsilly

had guarded the Louvre Museum in a time of revolutionary riot. The bourgmestre of Ostend and the English captain of the ship *Britannia* certified to the good order of the company of soldiers recruited and led by Marsilly for Portugal in 1833.

‘I, a bad son? driven from home and disowned by my family?’

Louis de Marsilly read letter after letter to show the enduring affection of his mother and brother and other near kin; and he forced the Avocat-Général to confess that the accusation of violence against his father was taken from an anonymous letter. The Court retired for deliberation, but decided that the prosecution had the right to use even anonymous communications.

The Avocat-Général then produced a second unsigned document—‘from a Deputy’—to prove his charge that the prisoner had been a ‘bad son.’ The prisoner demanded that it should be read. Every one laughed when the name came out in the first line. Martineau, member of Parliament for the prisoner’s native department of La Vienne, prayed an honourable colleague ‘to come to the aid of a family in the person of one who should have been

its glory. He was fitted to occupy an important place in society; great passions have led him astray. I do not wish to excuse him—he does not deserve it. His family is worthy of the greatest interest. His father was my comrade in childhood, and has the general esteem of all his part of the country.'

This cut both ways. It showed, at least, that the father was still interested in his son. As was constantly happening in this strange trial, nothing had been said to the prisoner about this document in his case. To the amusement of the jury, Marsilly declared that the prosecution must have tampered with the document.

'Martineau couldn't have been stupid enough to write against me like that in a letter intended to help me.'

The judges felt themselves obliged to allow the prisoner to speak at length in his own defence. He did it with bursts of oratory as extravagant as himself. With all its swollen, tasteless, resounding periods, the part of it which he devoted to his dead wife is worth citing, if only to contrast the rhetoric of Louis with the literature of Anna de Marsilly. Both show the faults of their time; but both

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thrill with the human feeling which is of all time. Louis is recounting to the jury how the Public Prosecutor tore him from his dying wife.

‘I was forced to go, and twenty times that hand, once so beautiful, now bearing nought but the signs of death, waved me her adieux until I had gone forth from the hospital where I left all my hopes.

‘Gentlemen of the jury! death had taken hold of Madame de Marsilly. She felt and I saw the coming of the last shock of all—that which separates soul and body. A few moments more and that woman with feelings so noble, that woman so sensitive and energetic and generous, would be but a corpse. Why take from me those last moments? Why snatch from her a last consolation? What need was there to do so great hurt? How long was the night which followed my return to my prison! How I suffered! And, when morning came, they refused to let me perform the last duties to her lifeless body!

‘God! it seems to me but yesterday it was happening—to-day—now—for evermore! I seek the hand which reaches out to me from the heights of heaven. My only, my last comfort shall be to see and grasp it!’



‘Not guilty!’ rang the instantaneous verdict of the jury. The crowd broke through the line of gendarmes. The officers and students were preparing to carry Louis de Marsilly in triumph from the Court room to the street, when the unexpected happened once again.

## XXVIII

The trial of Louis de Marsilly at Aix had awakened the attention of old adversaries. Doubtless too, as Marsilly believed, the Public Prosecutor used them to rid his own jurisdiction of so cumbersome a client.

In full Court, at the moment of his acquittal, the warrant for a new arrest, signed by a *juge d'instruction* of Paris, was served on him by the police. The crowd, learning what was going on, refused to allow the Public Prosecutor once more to take possession of their hero's person. For a moment it looked as if magistrates and gendarmes together might be thrown out of the windows.

Marsilly, from his superior height, calmed the incipient riot.

‘Gentlemen,—you have shown too much interest in me for me to doubt one instant

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your good intentions. You would do me the greatest harm if you used violence to these gendarmes; let the Public Prosecutor perpetrate this new injustice. For a year I have been in prison; a few days more will not change my situation. I shall return in peace to my prison, for soon I shall be free.'

The crowd fell back. Marsilly turned to the stupefied gendarmes who had just received orders to seize his person. He gave the word of command as he had done when he turned back the fleeing soldiers of Oporto.

'Gendarmes, follow me!'

They fell obediently into step behind the man whom they were to lead to prison. The crowd followed after. At the prison gate, still heading the procession, he turned to address his thanks to the 'brave population' of Aix..

He was not yet done with the people of Aix. The accusation on which he was now to be tried in Paris was connected with a paper signed by him in some one of his senseless business transactions of ten years before. The *huissier* or bailiff who had to see that the warrant was duly executed, came next day to take Marsilly from the prison to the Rhone

boat, on which he was to begin his journey, under arrest, to Paris.

The spiritual exaltation from his yesterday's success in Court had passed. Louis de Marsilly had also received news that his mother was dying ; and he knew that he should not see her again in life. 'I go from tomb to tomb !' he said to the citizens of Aix.

His depression now changed to impatience and he welcomed the unlucky bailiff with a blow. Such an 'outrage to public authority' had to be punished on the spot. The journey to Paris was delayed until Marsilly could be tried for it at the police court of Aix. On the 27th of May, one week later, he was brought out of prison and taken to the Court.

Aix, besides its college, had the university faculties for the region of Marseilles. The law students took advantage of this new occasion to make another demonstration against the authorities. They applauded Marsilly as he was brought into Court ; but they could not prevent the judge's condemning him to the very moderate fine of twenty-five francs. Marsilly at once appealed—and so did the King's Prosecutor, *a minima*, as

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the French say, for that official thought the fine was too small for the offence.

This new affair kept Marsilly nearly a month longer at Aix. The appeal was tried on the 18th of June. The Court room could not hold the public; and the students, who were shut out, climbed up by ladders to the windows from the outside. The judges thought it prudent to acquit Marsilly altogether. All Aix applauded, just as children all over France applaud to this day the beating of policemen and bailiffs in their Punch and Judy shows.

It was the time of slow travel, before railways. At last, on the 15th of July, Louis de Marsilly arrived in safe custody in Paris. Here, too, the Court was good to him, for it refused to entertain the case against him. This confirms the suspicion that the new accusation of old date was a made-up charge for the occasion. Its failure left Louis de Marsilly free for a year and a half to go on troubling authorities, civil and military.

## XXIX

Half the cabinet ministers of King Louis Philippe were soon obliged to give strict



orders that, under no pretext, should Louis de Marsilly be admitted to their presence. He pestered Minister of the Interior de Gasparin for back pay as one of the Paris volunteers who had set the King on his throne. From Minister of Justice Persil he demanded condign punishment of the magistrates of Alger, and restitution of property which he declared they still withheld from him. On Prime Minister de Broglie he urged an ultimatum to Spain for the indemnity he claimed.

His soldiering days were over. All his adventurous energy was henceforth given to manipulating the law. He re-wrote the Code; and he besieged Government and public men with petitions that they should consider the urgency of substituting his work for the Code Napoléon.

His romantic story, which was well known, his picturesque personality, and his extravagant talk and gestures might interest for a time. In the end he became a nuisance and public terror. He could not go on so for ever.

The King's Government, when new, had taken him from the debtors' prison because

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it needed him ; but the operation of the law had been suspended only. Government now allowed, perhaps instigated, the law to re-take its course.

On the 9th of December 1836, Louis de Marsilly was arrested and haled without further trial or ceremony to his old place in Clichy. His creditors of ten years before who had obtained the judgment confining him in prison for debt, had their hopes renewed that he might be brought to pay them. So they gave the necessary agreement to pay his prison expenses meanwhile.

Louis de Marsilly went off quietly enough to the debtors' prison. He had two ideas in the back of his head.

One was that, after five months' confinement, he would be freed once and for all from his creditors. In fact, since his release and while he was delivering Belgium from Holland, the law concerning imprisonment for debt had been reformed.

A new law of the 17th April 1832 limited imprisonment for a debt smaller than 5000 francs to four years. Now the debt for which he had been imprisoned in 1827 was less than that sum ; and he had been already in

prison for it three years and seven months. With his new abounding knowledge of the law, he reasoned out that five months' prison would secure him final freedom.

His second idea was altogether practical. It was to write a book. He had documents enough — Anna's notes, the three hundred and more papers of his trial, his official correspondence with Consuls and Ambassadors and Ministers of State. He used his enforced leisure to compile these into a bulky pamphlet which he found means to publish in Paris in 1837.

For the title of his book he chose his own name, 'LOUISDE MARSILLY,' as famous enough. He was right as well as vainglorious in the choice; he had indeed won a name, such as it was, in the world. Underneath he printed a motto characteristic of himself:

*Glory to him who prosecutes crime!*

*Shame and infamy to all those who invent it!*

*Justice in Alger is a permanent crime!*

A publication of the kind cost money; but Marsilly somehow found money for all his needs except to pay his debts. It was most likely furnished him in small sums by his mother and, when she was gone, by his brother

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and sisters. We have also seen compassionate aunts hovering above the troubled horizon of Louis and Anna de Marsilly. Even his father realised that, at his own death, Louis would have to share in the family estate according to the Revolutionary law, which hinders parents from disinheriting their children.

The five months passed, and Louis de Marsilly was not released. He was informed that the law on which he based his hopes could have no retroactive effect. He was in prison in virtue of a judgment of the Courts based on the law of the Revolutionary year VI. (1798). And this law did not limit his time in prison.

Here was an opportunity for Louis de Marsilly to show his fighting qualities in his new field of the law. On the 9th of May 1837 he cited the prison authorities before the Correctional Court for illegal detention of his person. He lost his case, which was re-tried on appeal the 2nd August. The higher Court admired his dexterity in handling law codes and Parliamentary reports on the application of law reforms, but it decided against him.

For seven months more we hear nothing of



him, except that he abided his time in the debtors' prison at Clichy. Then the unexpected turn came, as it was sure to do with Louis de Marsilly, whether in war or in law.

### XXX

At the end of February 1838, Lepreux, Director of the 'House of Detention for Debt' at Clichy, had a long consultation with the Prefect of Police of Paris. The consequence was that Louis de Marsilly was transferred at once to the Paris prison of Sainte-Pélagie, which was used for political prisoners and criminals.

On the 1st of March, Marsilly cited before the Sixth Chamber of the Correctional Court, Lepreux, for abuse of power and illegal exactions; and, for calumny and insult, four of his fellow-prisoners at Clichy known as the 'aristocrats'; Count Léon, whose story is worth writing another day; Suan de Varennes; Chaltas, and Champon. He demanded from these collectively 10,000 francs damages—and he prayed the Court to award him this sum free from legal attachment by his own creditors!

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Director Lepreux told the Court frankly his side of the case. From the day Marsilly came under his charge, he had not been master of his house.

Marsilly kept him in hot water by writing complaining letters all the time to higher authorities in the Government prison service. Then, he split the prison population into two parties. The common prisoners obeyed him blindly; he organised them into 'the Philanthropic Society of Clichy'; and he obtained a reading-room for them from the Prefect of Police. The 'gentlemen's party,' on the contrary, refused to have anything to do with him.

The climax came when Suan de Varennes told him to his face that he was only a soldier of fortune, a Revolution-colonel, and that his record in the Criminal Courts was doubtful—and, on the whole, he had best not talk so much. Marsilly, with drawn knife, chased his detractor round the prison until the other prisoners seized him and brought him to the Director.

In a prison of that kind, for debtors and not for criminals, there was never much discipline or order, but this was going too far.

'You are a dangerous man,' said Lepreux.

‘The other day you threw a glass of wine in the face of the *cantinière*, and when her husband protested, you drew your knife on him too. I am going to report you higher up; and I am going to have you put in the punishment cell.’

When the two keepers attempted to lead him away, Marsilly tossed them and the Director together into the corner of the room. The guard had to be called out to master him; and his clothing was torn from him before he was safely locked up. It was then, at the urgent entreaty of Director Lepreux, that the Prefect of Police ordered the immediate transfer of Louis de Marsilly to Sainte-Pélagie, which was a prison in earnest.

Marsilly’s case against Clichy was thrown out by the Court at the first hearing. On the 28th of March, he cited before the same Court Director Prat of Sainte-Pélagie for illegal detention. He maintained, with a show of law, that he was in prison for debt and not for crime, and that the law gave no warrant to imprison him elsewhere than at Clichy, which was the debtors’ prison.

Director Prat answered that he was only obeying superior orders; that his new prisoner

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made his head turn, and he asked nothing better than to be rid of him.

The Court now decided that the transfer of Marsilly to Sainte-Pélagie was illegal. It condemned Director Prat to pay the costs of the suit; but it refused Marsilly the damages which he demanded in money.

The Prefect of Police, for his subordinate Prat, appealed to the higher Royal Court. This decided, on the 10th of May, that the transfer was legal and that the Prefect of Police need not send Marsilly back to Clichy.

Marsilly's creditors now took fright. They had been paying his keep at Clichy, and the possession of his person was the only guarantee of their debt; and Clichy had let him go! They at once cited unfortunate Director Lepreux to present their prisoner before the Court or be declared legally responsible for their claims against him.

The Prefect of Police, for his subordinate, refused to acknowledge the authority of the Courts in matter of administrative acts like the present, which regarded a prisoner legally at his disposition. And, on the 15th of May, he suspended the Court's action by an *arrêté de conflit*—a formal refusal to conform to the



Court's decision on the ground of its incompetence.

This would have been a legal deadlock if Marsilly had not joined with his creditors to carry the question up to that peculiar Conseil d'Etat which, in the Republic now as in the Monarchy then, gives the supreme decision in cases of conflict between the judicial and the executive or administrative powers of the French nation. Its decision in the case of Marsilly still rules, and it explains many of those questions of what is or is not legal in France that have puzzled the English-speaking world in more recent *causes célèbres*.

Marsilly made his appeal on the 20th of July 1838. The Conseil d'Etat decided that the Prefect of Police was in his right—that French Courts of Justice are entirely incompetent against Government officials in administrative matters. It is not quite the same thing; but to this day there is no habeas corpus in France.

### XXXI

Louis de Marsilly's creditors kept him in prison a year longer. They tired at last of

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paying for his living, even in prison; and they despaired of ever getting any of their money back from him. So, some time in 1839, he found himself once more in the streets of Paris, free to work out any fantastic scheme he chose for getting money for himself.

He was now a man past forty, and he had behind him a dozen years of irregular life, always running counter to the settled society of men around him.

After his marriage in 1826 he had been three years and seven months in prison for debt. Then, with his wife, he had had three glorious, agitated, wandering years and more of romantic revolutions and guerilla war, ending in four months of a Spanish prison. For three months after his liberation he had to wrangle for his rights with both French and Spanish authorities in Spain. Next, the moment he was left free to himself in Algiers, he again fell into the hands of constituted authority, such as it was, and passed eight more months in prison. It was then he lost, by death, Anna his wife—the only bright star that shone in his murky heaven. Still a prisoner, he was confined five months more in

Aix and Paris before he was given his liberty in his own country. After a scant year and a half of freedom, in which to pester the authorities with his rights and his new law code, the old law had seized and held him close in prison for these last three years.

What a framework for historical romance! Philosophers are divided as to whether such a man is to be considered a survival from past generations of *mousquetaires* and marshals of Napoleon, fallen on evil days of respectability when romance is in books; or whether he was just a man afflicted with a brain unable to stand the strain of modern civilisation. Both explanations point the way to prison.

The common life outside of a prison had become strange to Louis de Marsilly. The first thing he did was to join hands with others like himself, who were living on the edge of society.

An old acquaintance of his youth, a certain Riffaneau of Poitiers, had left home under a cloud raised by horse-thieving. He had opened a commission house in Paris. He welcomed the assistance of a man so conversant with the Code and all the artifices of Court procedure as Marsilly.

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Riffaneau's business was peculiar. He travelled through the Touraine country and bought up all sorts of produce that he could sell quickly in Paris. He paid for them with what purported to be 'commercial paper,' that is, bills of exchange or promissory notes which he endorsed. It was Louis de Marsilly's business to furnish such paper.

The Court, when it came to consider it, admired his ingenuity. These paper payments were for timber cut in imaginary forests; for cart horses sold in numbers in a city like Paris, which ought rather to buy them; and so on. The form and signature and endorsements of all these bits of paper were strictly legal, quite like the good paper current all over France, where the English use of cheques has never become popular. The signers of these promises to pay were like Marsilly's volunteers in the Revolution of 1830—old comrades from the debtors' prison and other such, ready to sign anything in return for a meal or a drink or a night's lodging.

Those who accepted such paper from Riffaneau did not look too closely into the signatures. It was a time when commerce bartered and took risks; and Riffaneau





THE LAST ARREST OF LOUIS DE MARSILLY.



allowed as much as 60 per cent. discount on his paper. Peasants and villagers thought him a city fool and accepted it eagerly.

Complaints naturally soon began coming in to the Public Prosecutor in Paris. He ordered the arrest of Marsilly and Riffaneau for the crime known in French law as *escroquerie*, in the nature of swindling. Their trial came up at the Assizes Court of the Seine on the 10th of July 1840.

Riffaneau secured the services of a rising young barrister whose name the whole world was to know when France was in trouble thirty years later. This was Jules Favre, who was so unequal a match for Bismarck. Louis de Marsilly refused to allow any one to speak in his defence but himself.

‘I swore it to Anna, my dead wife!’

It is the last time we shall see him at work. He is worth considering, for he was now, as he had ever been, a child of the Revolution—and the Revolution is not yet over.

He stood up before the jury, carefully dressed as a civilian, with his moustaches waxed precisely, looking unabashed through the gold-rimmed monocle that was coming into fashion. He carried the documents of

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his defence in a new and bulky shagreen portfolio under his arm. He asked the Court for a little table, on which he arranged his papers in order.

Judges and lawyers were as interested as any one in his defence. Under varying forms, his arguments have been dished up to our own day by every freebooter of finance—by promoters and founders of companies whose stock is water and whose capital is wind.

‘Gentlemen of the Jury: It is true that the signatures of my bills of exchange are either fictitious or present no real guarantee. The bills themselves are drawn for imaginary business. But how can it be said that I used them to deceive when they were taken from my hands at forty francs for one hundred of their face value? Men who are willing to profit by discount like that know they run risks. Do bankers like Laffitte and Rothschild act differently? When they want a million in money, they have one of the clerks in their office write out a draft on London and they sell the paper for the money.’

*The Presiding Judge.*—‘But what you are saying there is what constitutes *escroquerie* in law.’



*Marsilly*.—‘Monsieur le Président, you should go back to first principles. Seventeen years I have been working day and night at a Code that will be complete. Look at England, the country where business is best regulated. There they don’t recognise your *escroquerie*. There, when a business man complains that he gave good merchandise for bad paper, they tell him—“So much the worse for you—you ought to have looked out!”’

All of a sudden the speaker stopped, pressed his hand to his forehead, closed his eyes, and made a sign to the judges.

*The Presiding Judge* (to the astonished jurymen).—‘The prisoner at the bar has warned me that, between half-past three and four o’clock, he is subject to these spells. The Court will take a half-hour’s recess.’

Marsilly came back to Court as fresh as ever. The crowd of witnesses against him were not of a character to win favour with substantial Paris jurymen; but Marsilly himself was impossible.

He cited as a witness to his good character Ganneron, a rich merchant and banker who had been his colonel in the National Guard. This looked like political satire; for it was

Ganneron who, as judge of the Tribunal of Commerce, had done most to upset poor old Charles the Tenth from his throne by declaring his Ordonnances illegal. This brought on the Revolution of July which freed Marsilly from Clichy ; and Ganneron was universally known as the type of the 'satisfied' politicians of King Louis Philippe's régime.

Of course, Ganneron paid no attention to this summons to come into Court and testify in favour of a man who used his freedom to annoy respectable people. Marsilly amused his audience by announcing that he should sue Monsieur Ganneron for damages ! Then his fit came on again.

*The Presiding Judge* (to one of the lawyers for the defence).—'Maître Wimpffen, begin the prisoner's defence.'

*Marsilly* (leaping to his feet).—'No one shall address the jury in my defence but myself. I am not ready.'

*The Presiding Judge*.—'Then I shall throw your case over to next session, and you will have to go back to prison.'

*Marsilly*.—'No, I will speak now. But Maître Jules Favre ought to speak first for Riffaneau.'

The Presiding Judge, content with the success of his artifice, granted this. When Jules Favre had finished his long speech, appealing to the jurymen's feelings for a man struggling against fate, Marsilly arose. He read out, with many flourishes, to his amazed and interested audience, passages from his pamphlet life of himself. They described his military glories and the sorrows of Anna, his dead wife.

For the jury, the effect of all this was destroyed by the winding up of his defence. He repeated and developed what he thought should be right in law for 'business speculation.' The jury gave their verdict against both partners—for making and issuing spurious bills of exchange. The Court condemned each to five years' imprisonment; and it added to Marsilly's sentence five more years of police supervision. On the 4th of September 1840, his appeal for a new trial was rejected.

Once more we hear of Louis de Marsilly. It shows that his own kin did not utterly cast him out. And it leaves a last kindly remembrance of this belated Don Quixote who went to the bad.

On the 5th of July 1841, he was brought

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out of his prison to answer two remaining complaints before the Seine Assizes. The Abbé Thory, who had been his tutor as a child, and who was now Vicar-General of the Bishop of Poitiers, came forward to tell the story of the life of Louis de Marsilly in his family and the lofty ambition with which he had gone forth to conquer the earth. The Court refused to entertain the new charges against him. Even justice had pity on him in his defeat.



## NOTES

### I.—THE *Causes Célèbres* AND THE DOCUMENTS IN THE CASES

I HAVE taken the lives of my four French adventurers mainly from Court documents cited in the *Causes Célèbres* of the time. The French have always had a liking for this kind of literature; and so great a man in the making of history as Edmund Burke, long before my cases came up, regretted there was nothing quite like it for celebrated English Court trials.

The historical value of the many publications bearing the name is very unequal. Some are reports made at the time; others were compiled long after. All keep to certain general lines of the cases, since these were known to their readers; but many take their particulars from hurried newspaper reports or conjectures, or from popular legends and suspicions, and they fill up the gaps from imagination. I have been on my guard even against official reports, when they were evidently written with a view to moral or political or legal edification. Men of government and law contend for their *chose jugée* just as the people hold fast to their legend.

My first care has been to check off my cases as reported with the history of the times as known from authentic documents. This is not always easy. In a case more celebrated than any of mine—the trial of King Louis XVI.—it is still commonly printed that he was condemned to death by a majority of only one vote (361 to 360) in the Convention which tried him. Now Belhomme, in his book *Les Régicides*, as long ago as 1893 presented documents showing that the votes were 367 to 334, or a majority of thirty-three, while Professor Lavissee in his school manual gives the figures as 387 to 338. I make no pretence to original investigation of this kind; but I have aimed at a judicial as well as interesting rendering of what, for more exalted personages, would be counted authentic history.

I have added no fiction of my own, neither adornment nor embroidery, to real facts. I have contemporary warrant even

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for the few utterances which I put in the mouths of my adventurers.

Professor Wigmore, author of a great legal work on *Evidence*, has drawn my attention to an instance that marks the pitfalls of this kind of literature for the unwary. The essential plot of Edgar Allan Poe's *Murder of the Rue Morgue*, without mention of Poe, has been written out and published in Germany as a genuine French *cause célèbre* and fathered on a known Paris judge, with a proper-looking reference to the authentic *Gazette des Tribunaux* of an earlier date than Poe's writing.

The air of reality created by this skilful use of authentic names led to the suspicion that Poe took his story from this Paris case. But an exhaustive search has shown the reference to be false: the German account does not agree with the official record of the high police officer whose name had also been imported from real life into the story; and no French judge ever wrote out his cases for publication as *Causes Célèbres*. It was German literature of the kind which had evidently been enriching itself from Poe's invention.

In the days when my cases were reported, it sometimes happened that the best talent of Paris Grub Street was at work on the weekly penny numbers of these *Causes Célèbres*. Armand Fouquier, whose name I have not found in the biographical dictionaries, was such a writer. He was one of the first Frenchmen to show an historical sense of documents in cases. His work has been praised and used by such recent authorities in French documentary history as M. Franz Funck-Brentano of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, and the popular writer who signs G. Lenôtre.

I have had occasion elsewhere to verify at length Fouquier's faithfulness to documents in the test case of the *Chauffeurs d'Orgères*, of which the city library of Chartres has the 3000 and more original pages. (There is also a copy bound up in six folio volumes at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.) For Charles of Navarre, as here narrated, Fouquier's exact handling of the official reports, which alone were accessible to him, has been established by late researches in the original police and Court papers at Paris and Rouen.

His penny numbers were printed more than once in the fifties and sixties of last century; but his romantic arrangement of facts, his style which came to be out of fashion—and, perhaps, his giving too much authentic history—led long ago to his disappearance from current popular literature. It is

hard to find his books nowadays. Wilkie Collins must have known them well, for the turning-point of his plot and his vital scene in *The Woman in White* are all but copied from one of Fouquier's *Causes Célèbres*, as I hope to show another time.

The original Court documents, on which the accounts of these *Causes Célèbres* were or should have been based, cannot now be consulted in all the cases, although no country has so painfully preserved every scrap of its official paper as France. Sometimes documents in the case belong to the Government Ministries; otherwise they have to be sought in the Court *greffes* or in local archives to which they have been transferred. In cases like mine, where the publicity of Court trials usually makes known the authentic story, research in the mass of manuscript papers which were actually before the Court would be justified only as an apprenticeship to the documentary study of more serious history, or where some historical question of general importance is involved.

A good instance occurs in one of my cases. Since I prepared the story of Charles of Navarre for this book, Madame J. de Saint-Léger, under the auspices of G. Lenôtre, has published the result of her long and complete researches of the kind under the title—*Était-ce Louis XVII. évadé du Temple?* My first treatment of the case was based on the authentic, though incomplete, Court and police documents used by Armand Fouquier; but I have been obliged to modify and complete it in accordance with the novel bearing given to the case by these latest documents. This reaches not only backwards but forwards, as the Napoleonic historian, Frédéric Masson, has since shown. Charles of Navarre here takes his due place in the historical evolution of the lost Dauphin—an evolution not yet finished.

The supernatural element, so characteristic of French Legitimist agitation, is found in the visions of Martin of Gallardon which I have inserted in their proper place. (The letter of his heirs was printed in the June number of *L'Ami de la Religion*, 1834.)

I doubt if any other of my adventurers, with their far more brilliant records, can have such greatness thrust upon them; but I have tried consistently to bring out their enlightening place, however small, in great history.

Collet, as we have seen, succeeded in burning the *dossier* which contained the most interesting papers concerning his



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transformation feats in Napoleon's armies. When the game was up, he wrote out his own account of his life to complete, not to dispute, the disclosures of his trial and, in particular, to rectify the popular lives of him which had already been printed. A new edition of this life of Collet by himself has been in preparation in Paris for some time.

Louis de Marsilly also wrote out the story and controversies of his stormy life (published by Baudouin, Paris, 1837). It is not without historical value, if only for the light it throws on difficulties encountered by the French in organising their new colony of Algiers—difficulties experienced by more than one civilising country in our own days. Its chief interest for us, who look for the human story and not for colonial politics, lies in the letters of his wife Anna; and these I have translated as they stand. Their style and sentiment are conformable to what we know of her, and they are utterly strange to her husband's own writing. He could never have achieved their heart-breaking reality.

Pierre Coignard and Maria Rosa were not of the writing kind. The Public Prosecutor was not willing to back down officially from his first assumption concerning Maria Rosa's identity; but the obvious opinion of the Presiding Judge, and the testimony found out of Court by the most painstaking of the press writers at the time, are sufficient evidence of this part of her story as I have told it. For two years this trial excited all France and, by turns, terrified and amused the cynical old King Louis XVIII., on whom it reflected from more than one point of view. Yet it is so forgotten that I have found no mention of it or its principal actor in ordinary French works of reference except in a list, without explanation, of the chief cases defended by his lawyer, the celebrated Dupin *jeune*. There it appears under the bare title—'Case of the Spurious Comte de Sainte-Hélène.'

For my adventurers' wars and their mixing with historic personages, there is no need of bibliography here. Ordinary manuals of history will supply the needs of the general reader whose interest goes beyond the mere story of these lives. The student of history will have trouble to keep up with the new and authentic work which is being done for him in this period of social ebullition, settling down but slowly after the great Revolution. I believe the bubbling careers of my adventurers may help to make known human society in those years, so near to us and still so obscure.



The very readable documentary studies which M. Ernest Daudet is publishing periodically from collections hitherto closed to the historian, introduce us to the reality of the little-known Bourbon Restoration. We have instructive glimpses of Decazes, the favourite Minister of Louis the Eighteenth, and incidentally of the King himself, in the lives of our Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène and Charles of Navarre. Collet's story takes us back to a neglected episode in Napoleon's portioning out of Europe: it has been studied in a quite new book by M. Jacques Rambaud—*Naples sous Joseph Bonaparte* (1911). Some years of the military career of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène belong to another Napoleonic episode narrated for the first time in full in Grasset's *Malaga, province française* (1910). There are also recent publications, published under the auspices of the French War Office, which deal technically and completely with Napoleon's operations in Spain; and there are classical English works that may gain in interest from the story here told of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène winning his name and place in those Peninsular Wars. I need not add that the *Memoirs* of the Count's great enemy, Vidocq, are not authentic, although he was capable of giving them his name.

I fear that an inquiry, free from political controversy, into General de Bourmont's expedition into Spain under Louis XVIII. has still to be made; and the authentic history of Louis Philippe and how he came to be king, is also unwritten. This, with the curious persistence into our own days of Carlists in Spain and Miguelists in Portugal, should lend timely interest to the years of romance lived by Louis and Anna de Marsilly. There is room for an accessible and authentic account of the adventures of their comrade, Dom Pedro's English Admiral Napier.

I have referred in their story to George Borrow's contemporary observation of the wild times in Portugal and Spain when the Marsillys were at their adventures. Those who wish to thrill to the more cruel reality of the chain-gang in the cases of Collet and the Count will find full opportunity in a few pages of *Le dernier jour d'un Condamné*, by Victor Hugo, who was also a contemporary. Of Charles of Navarre we have more real knowledge than his contemporaries, for they knew him only as the grotesque Mathurin Bruneau; our story is perhaps the first attempt in English to show him in his real place.

Indeed, these little stories bear their contribution to the world's pleasure with them. And, because they are true, they also add to the great tale of the world's history.

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### II.—HISTORY'S TIME-TABLE FROM 1774 TO 1840

#### *Louis XVI.*

- 1774—Louis xvi. becomes King—Pierre Coignard born.  
1785—Birth of Dauphin Louis xvii.—Collet born—The 'lost Dauphin' was identified as Hervagault, born 1781; as Mathurin Bruneau (Charles of Navarre?), born 1784.  
1789—Revolution begins—Bastille taken.  
1791—New Régime—Pierre Coignard apprenticed in Paris.

#### *Convention (from 1792)*

- 1793—Louis xvi. guillotined—Collet's father and Pierre Coignard enrolled in Republican armies—Reign of Terror begins—Collet's uncle, a priest, flees with him to Italy—Mademoiselle Laurendeau (mother of Louis de Marsilly) saves her father from guillotine.  
1795—Louis xvii. supposed to have died in prison of the Temple—Charles of Navarre is left by Vendean generals in château of Angrie; disappears in 1797.

#### *Directory (from 1795)*

- 1797—Hervagault appears; recognised as lost Dauphin (Louis xvii.) after 1799; imprisoned at Châlons.  
1798—Louis de Marsilly born—Pierre Coignard quits army.

#### *Napoleon Bonaparte (First Consul from 1799; Emperor 1804)*

- 1799—Pierre Coignard organises band of burglars in Paris.  
1800—Pierre Coignard sentenced to fourteen years at Bagne.  
1801—Collet enters military school.  
1802—Collet sub-lieutenant four years; in garrison at Brescia, Italy; afterwards at Bologna and Fondi (Naples)—Hervagault again imprisoned (Paris).  
1805—Pierre Coignard escapes from Bagne to Spain; with Maria Rosa, takes name of Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène; serves as officer of Spanish General Mina on Portuguese frontier—Hervagault released; Bruneau (?) on board frigate *Cybèle*; deserts in United States.  
1806—Napoleon makes his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples—Collet deserts after siege of Gaeta.  
1807—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène is made French officer in Napoleon's army in Spain by Marshal Soult—Collet appears as friar (Naples)—Hervagault re-appears (Paris).  
1808—Joseph Bonaparte is made King of Spain—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène distinguishes himself in guerilla

- service—Hervagault put by police on board frigate *Cybèle* sailing for American colonies.
- 1809—Collet quits friars; re-appears as French officer and exploits Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch (Rome); disappears (Lugano)—Hervagault imprisoned (Paris)—Vidocq, ex-convict, enters police.
- 1810—Collet re-appears as Italian priest in French diocese of Gap; then as general of Napoleon (Turin); next, as bishop (Nice); finally, in 1812, still undetected, re-enters French army as lieutenant (Brest).
- 1811—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène officer at Malaga, Spain, until 1812.
- 1812—Hervagault, confined at Bicêtre as mad, officially reported dead—Collet, on furlough, exploits army posts of southern France as Napoleon's intendant general (Napoleon in Russia); escapes after arrest; condemned on another charge to five years' prison (Grenoble)—Louis de Marsilly enters military school (Saint-Cyr).
- 1813—Joseph Bonaparte quits Spain—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène returns to France with French troops—Bruneau (?) in America.

*Louis XVIII.* (first Bourbon Restoration, 1814; finally King after Waterloo, 1815)

- 1814—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène sides with Louis XVIII. against Napoleon; retires with Court to Ghent; returns after Waterloo.
- 1815—King names Pontis de Sainte-Hélène lieutenant-colonel in garrison at Paris—Charles of Navarre appears.
- 1816—Louis de Marsilly lieutenant Royal Guards—Pierre Coignard's band reorganised; burglaries in Paris; King's Minister of Police Decazes employs ex-convict Vidocq—Charles of Navarre declares himself lost Dauphin (Louis XVII.); imprisoned at Rouen; measures taken by Decazes.
- 1817—Collet released; re-appears Christian Brother, etc., etc.—Charles of Navarre gains partisans.
- 1818—Count Pontis de Sainte-Hélène accused of being Pierre Coignard; flees; caught by Vidocq; Court officially declares identity—Charles of Navarre tried and sentenced to prison as Mathurin Bruneau.
- 1819—Pierre Coignard (Paris) sentenced to Bagne for life.
- 1820—Collet (Le Mans) sentenced to Bagne for twenty years.
- 1822—Mathurin Bruneau officially reported dead (Mont Saint-

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Michel); King's 'Procureur' asks for death certificate, 1826; Bruneau (?) recognised in Cayenne (French Guiana), 1844.

1823—General de Bourmont's expedition to Spain—Louis de Marsilly resigns from French army.

*Charles X.* (from 1824)

1826—Louis de Marsilly marries; imprisoned for debt, 1827; passes three years and seven months in famous Clichy prison (Paris).

*Louis Philippe* (from 1830)

1830—Revolution expels Charles x.—Louis de Marsilly released and reinstated in French army (National Guard) by new King.

1832—Louis and Anna de Marsilly in Belgian Revolution; at Court of Leopold I.; join Polish Liberators (Cracow).

1833—Louis de Marsilly recruits French company for Dom Pedro of Portugal; husband and wife fight together at siege of Oporto and in guerilla war of frontier; forced into Spain.

1834—Louis de Marsilly four months in Spanish prison; Anna appeals to Martinez de la Rosa, head of Spanish Government under Queen Cristina, Regent (Madrid); Louis struggles with Ambassador and Consuls (instances of time); Marsillys seek refuge in new colony of Algiers; colonial justice; arrest, prison, trial of Louis; Anna dies.

1835—Louis de Marsilly acquitted on appeal in France; obnoxious to King Louis Philippe's Ministers (Paris).

1836—Marsilly in prison for debt until 1839.

1837—Collet and Marsilly publish lives of themselves (Paris).

1839—Louis de Marsilly finally released from debtors' prison; engages in 'business speculation.'

1840—Marsilly accused of swindling; sentenced to five years' prison; last heard from in 1841, when Bishop for family obtains Court's clemency—Collet dies on eve of release from prison—Pierre Coignard died later in Bagne (Toulon)—his enemy, the famous ex-convict detective Vidocq, was caught aiding in crime and finally dismissed from Paris Police in 1832; fell under law once more while Louis Philippe was king; lived through Revolution of 1848 and Second Republic; died in obscurity under Napoleon III., 1857.







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